

The SMART SET

Edited by
George Jean Nathan
and
H.L. Mencken.



OCTOBER

35 CENTS

1920

A New One-Act Play
By George M. Cohan

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AND

HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$4.00

SINGLE COPIES 35 CENTS

Issued Monthly by Smart Set Company, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York

Entered as second class mail matter, March 27, 1900, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under act of March 3, 1879

Eltine F. Warner, Pres. and Treas.

George Jean Nathan, Sec.

Western Advertising Office, Westminster Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

The
SMART SET
The
Aristocrat
Among
Magazines



And Minstrels Flown With Pride

By John McClure

THE proud Semiramis in hell
Is not so full of pride as we
Whose heads are giddy with old rhyme
And echoes of lost minstrelsy.

Though she remember Babylon
And Babylon's bewitching sin,
Her memories are not so rich
As those of rhyming gentlemen.

Drowsy with ancient dreams we sit,
Giddy with old forgotten airs,
More gorgeous than her pageantry
And sweeter than her dulcimers.



Laying Prejudice Aside

By Charles Eugene Powers

LET us be fair to women. Let us recognize their special qualifications for politics. They have an instinct for intrigue and manipulation. They are never troubled by scruples where a principle is involved. They have a lust for power, being conscious always of that which Nature has denied them and seeking by subtle and devious ways to supply it. They indulge readily in personalities. They revel in accusations and recriminations. They thrive in confusion, tumult and chaos. They are past-masters in exaggerating a wrong and capitalizing a grievance. They realize that circumstances alter cases, being highly idealistic in one breath and sordidly practical in the next. They can bridge the most difficult situations with ease, being unhampered by a sense of consistency.

In their intellectual processes, they are flighty; hence more facile than men in following modern political arguments. They are full of sentiment, the ruling factor in present-day government. They are ready talkers and will add much to the bibliography of politics. As legislators, they can be depended upon to live up to the best Senatorial precedents in talking bills to death. They are resourceful and ingenious and will

add new and interesting complications to the pastime of politics which in a few brief centuries of male suffrage has already become passé. Their nose for scandal will make candidates more circumspect. When linens have to be washed in public, they will do the job thoroughly. If they do not actually purify, they will at least perfume politics. Ages of considering what the neighbours would think will make them very tender of public opinion. They will harmonize radicals and conservatives by their genius for embracing new ideas without disturbing old habits. They take naturally to finance, being able to make a dollar go farther and faster than men. They are expert in taxing incomes. They are not worried by deficits.

I might go on thus indefinitely; I might point out their preference for foreign affairs and their peculiar availability as diplomats in view of the present clamour against secrecy in diplomatic negotiations; but surely the facts already presented are sufficient evidence of woman's especial fitness for the political field. I, myself, was once opposed to woman suffrage; but, now that I have laid prejudice aside, I see clearly that it was ordained from the beginning.



A WISE man is one who can talk to a woman without telling her anything and who can tell her anything without talking.

The Lilac Lass

(A Complete Novelette)

By Stephen Ta Van

CHAPTER I

WHEN the French clock on the mantel in the second-story front room of the tall brick dwelling at Ninety-eight Standish Street struck the half hour between five and six of the afternoon of May 13th, 1911, John Hennion, the nominal owner, stood looking out through the large plate-glass pane of a North window, while in the chamber above—on a great carved bed befitting the birth, marriage or mortal exit of a member of Ware's valid aristocracy—the physical remnant of his wife's mother, Madame Lucretia Kinnicutt, approached with painful slowness the relief from sentence which her aged mind had reached some days before, after a decade's gradual fading.

The exhausted organism's stertorous breathing, horribly familiar to all in the house, seemed to pierce the floor to Hennion's ears. His brain, alert but devoid of a sense of humour, heard it without pity or cynicism, but with a calm consideration, almost impersonal, that had come to characterize his attitude toward the aged lady, the strange and ironically dramatic turn her destiny had taken, and the influence of her affairs upon his own.

He was a short, square and stocky man—"stugged" is the old New England word—with a well-shaped head and bulging calves. His age was fifty-six. Of philosophic and romantic tendencies, his stolid exterior gave no hint, but he had them, and though they found slight expression in his daily life, they served as well-springs of vitality in a nature

superior to the limited accomplishment to which, as his associates and he himself understood, the man was finally committed by age and circumstances.

A potential adventurer and brilliant engineer, he taught elementary geometry to boys at Ware. He had become a landmark, an institution on which the University could count with a trust tinged in the younger men by contempt for his lack of aptitude for advancement. Having no skill in acquaintance, he was misinterpreted by all except his friend Horace Ude, middle-aged son of Ware's richest man, who alone guessed the dreams that enabled him, a definitely placed assistant professor, and the head of a household which held for him no violent emotional possibilities, to keep green the garden of his soul.

To his wife, Alice, loving him placidly, and depending on him with the justified confidence of years, he was a finished and stamped product, comfortably catalogued. Neither she nor their daughter Sheila realized the truth that he was very proud, sensitive, chivalrous—an apparently mechanical man, in fact capable of laying down his life for an idea or a woman.

To himself, he was by way of being what many Americans become, a suppressed chorus in the drama of women-folk. Lacking the sense of humour, he was handicapped against easy success in orientation; but he was too intelligent to be vague, and in his solemn and slightly ponderous fashion he was in line to achieve a rhythmic relationship with his environment before old age could take him unaware.

His wife, after meeting him in the hall on his return from afternoon classes, had accompanied him to the room which they still shared—matter-of-factly on her part, with a faint aversion on his—and had then continued up the stairs to the third floor, to her mother's chamber. He had asked if there was any change in the old lady's condition, and she had replied that there was very little.

"Doctor Munn says she's holding out wonderfully. Oh, John, she is so brave, and the doctor is so kind!"

She recited certain details of the physician's pronouncement. She believed with the queer ostrich-like devoutness of her traditions in the wisdom of doctors (if not too young), and of ministers, and in the constitutional moral uprightness of the class to which she referred as gentlemen.

Her husband never ceased to wonder at fresh evidences of a simplicity that could live in the same mind with much practical shrewdness, but he had learned not to argue. Even in the days of the alluring blonde gaiety that had deceived him concerning her intelligence, he had met interferences in her mental processes. Later he understood definitely that she was stupid, and the discovery was a tragedy.

Little by little, with a patience that was a monument to his love for her, he had built up a knowledge of her outlook, had even learned a smattering of the strange language of vanished Ware, full of references to Mrs. Simeon Gale and Cousin Lilah, and other worthies long defunct, by means of which she and her mother communicated with each other. Imperfectly he comprehended her superb love for her mother—a devotion so self-hypnotic that it could idealize into an exhibition of moral courage—the last convulsive resistance of aged flesh against the assault of death.

Her capacity for self-deception amazed him.

Years before, at the beginning of Madame Lucretia's débâcle, she had commenced the fiction, which may have seemed to her a fact, that her parent

was not only "retaining all her faculties," but continuing to be an active personal influence in the family's affairs. She spoke importantly of Mother and Mother's thoughts and preferences, whereas to the uncoloured mind it was soon apparent that the real needs of the object of her love were limited to food and warmth, and the petting craved by a sick old child.

That fumbling frame, and the ruined face, like a bird's, without the dignity of judgment! How was it possible, he wondered, for her to lavish upon such a relic, however deserving of pity, an affection almost sublime. Her service sapped her strength; it was as though the older woman lived upon the younger's blood. He had trouble in viewing calmly the daily sacrifice, but a wrangle would only have grieved Alice. He was sure of her determination, and of the uselessness of protest.

His son, in Ware primarily on business, had suggested sending the ruin to a hospital.

"She wouldn't realize the difference," Malcolm Hennion said in his staccato voice that had a withering effect like a hot, dry wind. "She's no more than a stomach with limbs, poor old soul. She'd be much better off, and so would mother. Why don't you do it?"

"Because if I did, your mother would leave me."

He was conscious of the young man's amused contempt for the timidity which feared to disturb custom and habit, and the mingled comfort and annoyance of the long-established home.

Malcolm was of the nervous generation that lived in apartments and hotels, and seemed to shift its ways indifferently. What could he know of the desire for establishment? He would not feel the home-yearning unless he grew old, and that he would grow old was unlikely, for he was a mass of ailments and expensive habits. At various times he had cost his father heavily in pride and money—he was one of the crop of wild boys begotten by the old Ware Faculty—but he had finally obtained a grip on himself, and coincidentally on a phase

of the sale of expensive editions on the instalment system. His salesmen worked college towns profitably, and he came to Ware to follow them up. He had the qualities of his defects, one of them being an intellectual honesty admired by his father, when its violence was not too disconcerting.

"By the way, what about that *Cercle* business?" he asked, after being checked in his proposal to commit his grandmother to an institution. "It's a pity the old lady won't get a chance to cop, after holding out so long. How many of the brave little band of survivors are left? Not many, I should think."

"Only eight, I believe," said John.

"My God!" His son sat up with the gleam of the natural gambler in his cruel gray eyes. "But seven's the fatal number, isn't it? They split the pot when Number Eight goes."

"I believe so."

"What a shame! That little wad would have done mother a lot of good, and I suppose the old lady would have had the decency to will it to her, and not to the crazy cousins." The gleam died, his face assumed its customary mask, and with his long fingers, resembling those of Madame Lucretia herself, he rolled and lit a cigarette of specially fine-cut Virginia tobacco. "Think of it. Here you and mother have kept the old dame alive for God knows how many years, and she ups and dies just when she was going to be an heiress. What irony! And what a gorgeously wicked and barbaric thing the whole plan was."

He lapsed into silence, and his father read his thought correctly. Another might have believed him concerned with the loss of his own potential share of the vanishing heritage, but John knew that the hard mind was interested only analytically.

CHAPTER II

WIDELY divergent from his mother's people in mental gear and moral feeling, Malcolm Hennion would not have touched an inheritance coming from one of them.

In this perverse manner his Puritan strain declared itself as obstinately as any denominational guerilla's. His hatred of the Kinnicutt blood, which he held responsible for his weaker tendencies, made him scarcely less fanatical in his peculiar development of independence than were in an opposite direction, long before, the stiff-necked elders who journeyed perilously to a new land in search of freedom to conduct the worship of God in their own savage way, or their sons the Salem witch-finders, or their grandsons who in 1776 refused to submit to any oppression except one of their own choosing. The utter lack of harmony with his mother, dating from his early childhood, was typical of both natures. Each intensified the unpleasantnesses in the other, and the boy had grown up without experience in the lovely tenderness of the mother-and-son relation.

His father, inarticulate emotionally, had not learned to deal with him until late. Their relationship, difficult in its early stages, had developed into the commerce of wary friends, backed by sympathy and a mutual admiration of strength, which neither admitted directly to the other. Either would have gone to the stake in the other's place, the elder solemnly, the younger mockingly, and in effect their minds arrived at conclusions not dissimilar, allowing for the gap between their ages, and the peculiar experiences of each.

Thus to John Hennion also the plan of the *Cercle*, in which the life of Lucretia Kinnicutt was involved, appeared barbaric, though he saw it seriously and with less glitter. To poke fun at its victims seemed to him cruel, or at least a violation of natural good taste. He was not so bitterly sure of motives as his son, nor did he view actions by so merciless a light. Respect for life's dignity, and pity for the weakness of age, rather than regard for individuals, had kept him from telling Malcolm of a plot-development which would have struck from that electric brain a flash of morbid glee.

As he stood at the window, the

Cercle's strange history, which Malcolm knew quite well, ran through his considering mind in the form of a story, beginning with the importation from France, by a group of Ware's aristocrats, of the idea of gambling on the lives of children. It was in the days of bell-crowned hats and silk stocks, and his imagination painted the conspirators—among them a governor and an ex-minister to a Continental Power—elaborating the idea in a rich atmosphere of black walnut and port wine. They were later developments of Puritanism, proud, cynical, able; men who held themselves aloof from intimacy with their families, ruling rigidly, and stood up to pray in church, calling the Lord's attention to the honour they were paying him. Though they were rabid Northerners they were related to Southern families, and some of them held slaves. They and their sons who later fought for the Union despised Wendell Phillips for a mountebank, a consorter with negroes. Abolition they accepted, but not equality. Theirs was the spirit of an intolerant hereditary nobility, magnificent and ridiculous by turns. They conducted the business of living with a mingling of lavish simplicity and restrained display, and to men of their oddly mixed temper, there was nothing incongruous or brutal in the idea of the *Cercle*.

The idea was the formation of a pool or stock company, in which each man of a limited aristocratic list of about two hundred invested a fixed sum, in the name of some living child. The child owned the share represented by the investment. The whole capital was to be employed and held together until such time as only seven shareholders—that is, seven of the children—remained alive, when the holdings of the company were to be sold and the entire proceeds divided among the lucky seven, who thus drew their prizes, on the lottery system, with death making the drawings.

The thing was merely a gamble in longevity, and each gambler chose his youngest descendant to bet on. For the actual investment, a central piece of

ground was bought and an office building put up, under the management of a Board of Trustees. Fire destroyed the first building, and it was replaced by one of modern Ware's largest business structures, known as the *Cercle Building* for half a century by thousands who passed and repassed its portals without a suspicion of the arrangement upon which its operation depended.

For many years, deaths among the *Cercle* shareholders attracted no special attention. The investors themselves departed at various times—their bodies, scarcely stiffer in *rigor mortis* than in daily action, to narrow houses in the grim Arch Street Cemetery, their spirits to whatever land such lordly spirits reached.

The babies in whose names the shares were taken pursued the common course of babies, and the list suffered from the usual percentage of mortality. The property was managed skilfully, and dividends were sometimes paid, but few reckoned the shares as assets. The War—always "The War of the Rebellion" in old Ware—made many changes, and currents of thought and fashion were turned. Hoop skirts went out, and bustles came in, and the tiny parasols that the belles carried to Saratoga. A progressive city administration raised a marble fountain at the corner of the Common, to replace the old Town Pump. The city grew, becoming something of a manufacturing center. Consequently new social bodies were formed; but the old division of the Oligarchy remained untouched, so far as its own feeling was concerned. In the consciousness of the *Cercle* investors' grandchildren, its power still existed. They could understand that they were aging, but not that the changes around them were significant.

Thus one could imagine that on an evening in the late Eighties, Mrs. Callam Heath, following the Ware custom of reading aloud the death notices in the *Evening Messenger*, exclaimed in the old-time language:

"Why, Auntie, I see Miss Rebecca Orton is dead! You know, Mr. Loton

Longworthy's first wife's cousin—the family lives in Boston now. The notice is copied from a Boston paper. Her father was a brother of our Mr. Fothergill, and they used to live in that little brown house on Herriott Street, next door to the 'Clumps'. You remember, of course. Now I think of it, she was a *Cercle* shareholder."

And Auntie, herself a *Cercle* shareholder, remembered; and the thought occurred to her:

"We're thinning out."

The same thought occurred casually in the same period to other shareholders. Later, memories, retained definitely a reckoning of the survivors. They were forty-six, and then forty-one. The observation, "Why, I believe she was a *Cercle* shareholder," began to have a regular sound. Driving past the *Cercle* Building behind the bays and faithful Washburn, the coachman, whose hair was turning gray, the grandmother of the Coldance twins perhaps remembered a certificate in her attorney's care, and considered pleasantly that while her rheumatism reappeared unfailingly with the approach of a wet spring, it did not seem so severe as formerly. Certainly to indulge in such thoughts was trivial, but one never could tell. An anchor to windward, etc.

The comparative element appeared sharply about 1900. They were going fast, then. The *Messenger* chronicled half a dozen exits within almost as few months, and to avoid estimates of contrasting vigour was impossible. It was noted that Mr. Roman Warrener bent beneath his last attack of lumbago, and that Miss Burton's January fall on the steps of the South Church had broken her strength. She could hardly last long, it seemed.

CHAPTER III

BUT Miss Burton exhibited astonishing recuperative power. There was a lull in the death-toll. In few countries—Hennion considered—was vitality more obstinate than in New England. Stony land and bitter creeds had bred a

grip, and even a waning class long removed from direct contact with the soil could be stubborn. The aged men and women of the *Cercle* hung grimly to their mortal fortresses, and were nursed tenderly by their kin. A few went so far as to develop a *bonhomie*, mildly rallying each other. But that was not the general feeling. Most were too full of valid dignity, too thin-skinned, for even the gentlest raillery. They stood upon their importance as examples of longevity, but strove to ignore the specific connotation.

And their relatives? Hennion often wondered what was the exact attitude of his wife. He knew that she would have lavished her tenderness, her apparently inexhaustible patience, with as generous an abandon if there had been no money involved.

What puzzled him was the extent of her self-deception. She seemed to dwell with her mother in a castle of illusion, wherein had been preserved miraculously the atmosphere of vanished Victorian Ware: the Ware of the Stowe-and-Beecher period, of "ladies" and "gentlemen," the Rebellion, bustles and black silk, Locksley Hall, port wine, and a blissful aloofness from the lower classes. The living corpse absorbed her mind, and she was content only when doing some one of the thousand petty services imposed by her love and duty.

From this twilight of the mind she emerged only when in contact with practical routine—in talk with a tradesman, for example. Then she showed herself an astute bargainer. Her husband could not understand how, possessing so sharp a financial sense, she could delude herself into the peculiar condition which pretended to ignore the existence of the *Cercle*. It was almost inconceivable that a person having such a sense should not relax and, however sincere her love and respect for her mother, relieve the tension by at least the suggestion of a wink. A thirty-thousand-dollar-windfall could not in the last analysis mean nothing to her. She knew what it was to pinch, for they had never had much money. Her father, like many of his class and gen-

eration, had died virtually penniless, his genius having been more urgently concerned with spending than with earning.

What a buoyancy had been hers when he first met her! She was all life and laughter, and not even the family poverty, compelling expedients hard for Kinnicutt pride, could dampen her spirit. A blonde Artemis, slightly heavy but with the grace of youth and health and a clear profile, and with the mild sincerity which in a young girl is so often mistaken for spiritual strength, she went to the heart of the solemn young engineer before she knew it.

The gravity of his passion puzzled her at first. It was the custom of the day to write long letters, especially during courtship; but his were voluminous. With writing of which the tiny characters, meticulously formed, flowed oddly from beneath that blunt-fingered hand, he covered sheet after sheet, enlarging upon ideals, literature, engineering experiences in the West, and through it all, upon his reverential love. He told her, carefully, of the event which had made the deepest impression on his life—his parents' tragedy. In the most delicate phrasing and with stilted efforts at which he could smile thirty years later, he tried to suggest the love between the young builder, half a mystic, and the tall girl in whose blood was the lure bred by generations of following the sea. It was a white flame—the millionth case—that neither blurred nor weakened with time, but seemed to gain in luminous intensity. The return of the workman in the evening was a resurrection of the worshipper at the altar, not the usual daily collapse of the sweat-stained male; and through childbirth and amid cooking and sewing, in a two-story wooden house in a treeless Middle Western town, the Well-Beloved held her mystery. . . . There was a gown of odd pattern that she used to wear while awaiting her man's homecoming, a dull blue gown cut squarely and embroidered in silver, giving her the look, with her high, white forehead, and heavy, pale-yellow hair, of a viking's daughter out of a pagan saga.

She met her mate unsmiling, and the souls fused when the lips touched.

The son, grave while still a baby, knew early that he was of secondary importance. They brought him up carefully, lovingly, with great patience, but there was always a reserve. They had no passionate affection to give to him, being absorbed in each other. Quarrels were rare in the house. He never saw his parents only in distress until he was grown. One twilight a little before his nineteenth birthday he heard sobs through a door open a few inches, and looking in saw his mother weeping in his father's arms. So close they were, the yellow hair streamed over both, and both were racked by the same grief. It was as though a secret door had been opened behind a tapestry of stately design, revealing a torture-chamber.

This scene he never disclosed to Alice, but he told her of the double suicide a month later, and of his discovery of the bodies. There was no explanation, or need of one. The progress of the woman's cancer had reached such a stage that realizing the unique beauty of their former happiness, and the horror to come, both had felt that further life would be a profanation.

The boy had then shown the magnificence of a romantic spirit. Without hesitation he bought concealment from the officials, and the bodies were buried unadvertised. It was not hard to accomplish in that raw, boardwalk town. He left the place without money, but with the satisfaction of having saved from stares and jibing the termination of the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

Alice thought the suicide horrible, and its suppression fantastic if not immoral. His recital of it came near making a break between them. He might have let the break come if his vision had not been dimmed by the illusion of desire. When he thought in middle age of his frantic anxiety, half-ashamed regret mingled with mild amusement. What would have been the result if he had failed to urge his love? He would have

arrived at Russia or some Eastern mountain-country, perhaps, instead of remaining quietly at Ware. Certainly he would not have refused that Chinese offer, made on the strength of his early work in the Dakotas. The rank and perquisites of a mandarin! They had offered him those, to build a railroad in China, the cradle of history, the dwelling-place and tomb of mysterious yellow millions, home of the Oriental wisdom that had forgotten more than the West ever knew.

The adventure drew him like a magnet; but Malcolm was a baby of six months, and Alice had set the full force of her resistance against his going. What was she to do without her great, strong John? She could not imagine why he wished to go to China, of all places, where there was so much dirt, and the people were repulsive and treacherous. He might as well have wanted to go to Africa, and be mangled by a lion, like brave Dr. Livingston. Not even she could quite picture her John as a missionary to the heathen, but to her mind most foreign countries except the European were much alike. She detested Chinamen, negroes, and the Turks concerning whose atrocities upon the virtuous Armenians such ghastly tales were beginning to be told. The Japanese were exceptions. She had once sat at table with a pair of them, and they were so little, and pronounced the word "potato" so quaintly.

Ah, well, he knew something about her mental processes by then. To leave her would have been really cruel, and he was still optimistic about the Ware situation. Faithful work, he believed, would bring its reward. He worked hard, and also tried faithfully to meet social calls.

In the set of which the Kinnicuts, whatever their financial condition, were charter members, he was of course an obvious alien; but he thought that patience would bring acceptance. Rhett, the history man, who had married an Aydelotte, was a farmer's son. Rhett, however, had good looks, and brilliance, and a wit that was death to snubs; and

even Rhett was not so completely accepted as he had thought.

Curious, how the grim old families, stubborn in their decline, hung together! His mother-in-law, proud as a female Lucifer, had never quite forgiven him for marrying her daughter. At the wedding she organized a rescue party in case the honeymoon should begin badly, and for years she could never think of him as other than a savage.

Once, rising early by accident, she saw him in the little garden behind the house, tending the Jacqueminots before the sun grew hot. She hailed him dictatorially, and when he approached exclaimed with surprise:

"Oh, it's *you*, is it? I thought it was a nigger"—the inference being that none save a humble hireling of colour would naturally be about such business in the early hours.

He loved any garden, but had always disliked the Standish Street House. It was like a mausoleum, inciting the unwary mind to thoughts of death. The exterior was dignified but forbidding. The doorway seemed designed to emit a coffin and its supporting black-gloved crew; one expected to meet them when mounting the high granite steps. The hall was dark, and decorated with steel engravings spotted in the corners. In one, General Washington presented an impassive front; in the other, General Grant. The titles (in script) might have been exchanged without damage to the reputation of either officer. A third engraving depicted some terrible catastrophe of biblical days, in which humanity was as definitely deprived of hope as any Puritan could wish.

And yet the old barrack had its appealing side. It suggested the aged relative-in-law with whom he had been saddled for half his life, whom he could not put away, but for some of whose qualities he could not help feeling a half-amused admiration.

He would have sold it a thousand times, Malcolm frankly loathed it, and Sheila liked it only for her mother's sake; but to Madame Lucretia and to Alice herself it was the home, the castle,

the symbol and cabinet of the Kinnicutt greatness. It fairly gobbled money in interest, taxes and repairs. There was never a time when it would not have been a better house if it had been different.

But bad though it was, it was a roof-tree, and a characteristic one. Proudly aristocratic, it stood gloomily adjacent to, and overlooking, the crucial corner of Whitmarsh Avenue—the Avenue—that fortalice of the old Oligarchy, of which every dwelling, every elm and maple, had a history of significance in Ware. It had a definite personality which epitomized its ownership, and like the last authentic representative, and the social order of which she was a member, it carried a share of pathos to its imminent metamorphosis.

CHAPTER IV

THROUGH the plate-glass window—closed in spite of sultry weather—Hennion could see a little way up the Avenue the house of his friend Horace Ude, or more accurately, of Horace Ude's father; and there was transpiring the event bearing on the *Cercle*, of which Malcolm was ignorant, and which would have moved him, had he known of it, to sardonic entertainment.

The event was Elias Ude's last illness; for with dramatic patness destiny had laid low at the same time two of the eight *Cercle* survivors. Elias had more mind than Madame Kinnicutt and, unreconciled to his departure, saw death looming over him with the spirit of a savage combatant, who had often taken life by the throat. His struggles wore him out; but when his son remonstrated, he gave vent to a typical assertion:

"By God, I'll stick it out to beat Lucretia Kinnicutt, the old parasite!"

Horace did not repeat the speech, but the nurse did; and Hennion, with his closest approach to the kind of amusement that his son would have felt, visualized the buccaneer rallying the last vestige of energy in his shattered mechanism for a final consciousness of villainy. A *Cercle* share of twenty-five

or thirty thousand dollars was of little importance to his estate—he was at least four times a millionaire—whereas to Alice Hennion it meant a fortune; but having seldom failed in the course of a long life to do an injury when the chance offered, he was determined not to lose his individuality at the end. He hated all back-sliders, weaklings, snivellers; sneered at chastity, except in his own women; assaulted religion with a raucous whoop; would have burned monasteries and set his troopers to pricking the monks down-hill with spear-points if he had been a mediæval captain. In every way except in pride he had insulted his caste. When he was fifteen he ran away to sea, fought for a foothold in the West Indian rum-and-molasses trade, and returned at thirty-four with a wooden leg and a working capital. He put his money into tenements and lots, sold them and bought others, married at forty a colourless girl whom he treated abominably, and rebuilt the Ude mansion on the Avenue when his uncle died. He was a scandalous rascal; but he was a Ude, he carried himself, wooden leg and all, with a fierce pride, and in the essentials of domineering temper and tremendous egotism, he was unmistakably of the Elect. The Avenue accepted him, with reservations. Children were told:

"That's Mr. Elias Ude, dear. He's a very wealthy man, but a little peculiar. Perhaps it would be just as well if you didn't go too close to him. He isn't very fond of little children."

His own child, everyone knew, was irony personified. In place of the lusty, squalling brat that could logically have answered with enthusiasm to a buccaneerish paternity, the unhappy Mrs. Ude produced a stunted, puling infant, and promptly died from chagrin.

The boy shrank from his father from the first. Before he could talk, it became evident that he abhorred Elias' deep-sea booming. When he was five, the approach of the loud, limping foot-falls would send him to the edge of a spasm. At ten he liked books and pictures, and quiet games in which the

clothing was not rumpled. To prim little girls in white starched frocks he would show his collection of postage stamps, and the solemn children, gazing under an afternoon light from high windows at stamps from Persia, made living pastels which would have been enjoyed by a French painter of the group that was dangerously modern when in England Sir Frederic Leighton was at his palmist.

Later, Horace avoided girls. They made him self-conscious. His father had told him a thousand times that he was a fool, and he began to believe it. Fortunately he escaped to a boarding-school, and after a long struggle achieved his perspective; but he never forgot or quite recovered from Elias' early browbeating. Realizing ultimately the bitter disappointment caused by his personality, he tried to accept his father's contempt without malice. He would have been, in mediæval times, one of the monks dispossessed and pursued by the captain's troopers.

His matured taste in art was excellent, and he bought beautiful and valid things: porcelain of worth, and well-chosen American landscapes.

Like the rest of his character, however, it was slightly warped by a commercial twist. As he grew older, his love of money passed from caution to the edge of miserliness. Even the grim Elias was compelled to respect his genius for protecting five and one-half per cent. Gradually, in proportion as age and passion made a craggy ruin of the veteran of rum-and-molasses warfare, the care of the estate was turned over to him, and moving quietly, like some small gray animal, he guarded and increased the capital with an effect as ruthless as that obtained by any of his father's explosions. The brokers said that he was harder to deceive than his father.

If he was deceived at all, his friend believed it was by the lady whom he had married, the daughter of an impoverished New Hampshire family, met at a Massachusetts shore resort of dignity. She had a pallid grace, and beautiful

wrists and ankles, and was clever enough exactly to appraise her assets. Always in white or black, with violets at her modest girdle, she innocently exposed the wrists, and allowed the merest suggestion of the ankles to appear.

She was wise—old as the world, not grasping, but persistent. She fascinated little Horace, who moved slowly around her like a wary perch around delicate bait in a quiet nook, with eyes very like a perch's. Having hooked him, she suppressed the ankles completely, but continued to wave the wrists, which came to have a hypnotic connotation, like the arm clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful, in the Tennysonian poem then fashionable. At Ware's exclusive tea-tables one could not escape them. Always they were emerging whitely into the foreground from black three-quarter-length sleeves, while from the fair fingers that held daintily a fragile cup, flamed with a solid radiance the deep diamonds of the netted Horace.

She made him almost too clever a wife. She bore him three children, all pale, all with eyes a little like a perch's, and never committed the error of neglecting him for them. His house was beautifully run, his wishes were respected before they had been expressed. She rose to the ultimate degree of tact by so managing the titular commander, Elias, that he did not know he was being managed, and thundered forth his incipiently senile commands without a suspicion that they were often intercepted between quarter-deck and fo'c'stle. She was the only human being to whom he had been known to apologize for his vocabulary.

She had but one bad blemish, technically, as spouse and chatelaine, and for that one she was not strictly responsible, since it did not in its true character exist at the time of marriage. For how could she, or anyone not a prophet, have foretold that her adolescent brother, Paul Wrightstone, would develop not only the eccentricities of genius, but to an uncertain extent the genius itself, a madness even more embarrassing?

A silent youth, apparently harmless

save for a mild poetic tendency, Paul grew up near Concord without making any special trouble or deviating widely from the accepted path. It was a bomb when he announced that his relatives and surroundings bored him hopelessly, and departed for the Metropolis so casually that the family failed to grasp the finality of his action. He did not return to the nest except semi-occasionally when he was drunk and, as he would afterward explain calmly, irresponsible. He had, however, a knack of getting involved in difficulties out of which it became necessary to bail him—personal escapades, and political forerunnings of bolshevistic disorders.

In the absence of Wrightstone males, Horace Ude found himself elected to perform this function. Many phases of bohemian existence were revealed to him in the course of a decade's rescue trips, and an especially disagreeable side of the matter was his own feeling of pollution, while the astounding Paul, eternal child, emerged brightly as a faun from each disgrace that should have overwhelmed him.

At last they got rid of him, and heard no more until as "Scaramond," he made his brief flight across the artistic sky—though at the time, "artistic" was an adjective held in dispute as applying to the wild negroid laughter of "Voodoo Echoes," and the orange splendour of "The Haytian Imperial Salute."

A friend sent them a review of the poet's work, but it was Choctaw to them. Horace was competent in established art, but an advance prophet of the syncopated rhythm that was to express musically the nervous decadence of a new century was beyond him.

The only clear thing at first was that the wretched Paul had become notorious in a new way. Then the notoriety was complicated by success. His doggerel had a peculiar catchy quality, hateful yet resistless. It was scored and played as a test in a burlesque house, caught up, whistled on the street. People in Ware began to ask questions. The opinion was voiced by George Peacock, perpetual *enfant terrible* of the University English

department, that the stuff really had literary quality. A philologist became interested in Paul's use of certain forms of obscure negro dialect. The culmination was an invitation to give a reading under the auspices of the English Department, with comments on theory and method.

The Udes had to entertain him. He appeared sedately in ultra-conventional costume, and gave the reading. The theory, he blandly informed Horace, he had invented for Ware's special benefit on the way from New York. Upon the source of his knowledge of obscure Haytian dialect—an ancient negro waiter born in Owosso, Alabama—he did not think it necessary to enlarge. His behaviour was almost immodestly exemplary; he basked and purred, while his hypnotized sister and brother-in-law, observing the play of the curved lines in his lean face of a thirty-six-year-old Pan, expected him at any instant to leap to the top of a bookcase, or pull the white whiskers of the Dean.

He did nothing of the sort, and sighs of relief were freed. His sister, with the perennial hopefulness of her kind, began to see upon the horizon a protracted conventionalization. Whatever the possibilities along that line, the poet fulfilled expectations, in his own way and time, as the result of meeting and responding to the charm of Sheila Hen-nion.

Little Sheila—a baby to her father—was seventeen, graceful as wreaths of mist over a meadow, elusive as the dream of a dream. In her gentian eyes dwelt together innocence and sophistication in the modern fashion, and her slim body had the fragrance of inimitable Youth. She was the Spirit of the Twentieth Century; but also she was foam on moonlit water, the tender foliage of a birch sapling on the slope of a steep hill, the perfume of all the flowers in Lost Valley.

Scaramond called her the Lilac Lass, and somewhere from his box, beneath the shopworn tricks, produced the power to fascinate her, as lightly as a shepherd piping in a pastoral. None but

the uncanny creature that he was could have done it, making music from discords, a shining castle out of odds and ends collected through the battering years.

He was as careful, as exact in his spinning, as a magician, and the gossips of Ware could neither bring him definitely to book, nor, being less clean than he could make himself, believe that he was working harmlessly. When at last his brother-in-law, never eloquent, took him to task, he skipped verbally like a goat on a mountain-side, in words which Horace reported to Hennion dryly.

"Visions and dreams, brother-in-law," the poet had said, "visions and dreams! Shall a girl live by bread alone? I will make of this thing a bracelet of fairy jewels—diamonds and emeralds, and strange semi-precious stones—for her to wear all her life and never be tired. She shall be able to say what few American girls—no, not one in ten million—can say. I mean, that she was loved by a poet, not altogether by brokers. I have given her what the brokers cannot give, and I shall stop when the time arrives."

"Rubbish!" said Horace. "You'll make the child unhappy."

"Happiness," Scaramond replied, "is not rubbish, and is relative. Some get it from fishcakes, some from check-books, and some from windmills. This is a totally different matter, and one about which I am better fitted to do the judging than you."

"Her father can do the necessary judging," Horace said, and went forthwith to present the case to Hennion.

CHAPTER V

THE visit had marked the beginning of real friendship between the two. The dignity with which one brought forward and the other received the embarrassing subject of the poet was pleasing to both, and gave the keynote to their intercourse. Hennion promised to suggest to his wife that Sheila be sent away on a visit, and Ude intimated that pres-

sure might be brought to bear on the poet by means of an allowance.

Each recognized in his unhumorous fashion the element of absurdity in the situation and in their maneuvers to meet it, but neither was moved to indicate his recognition by more than a flicker of light in the eye.

It was this suggestion of a wink—this faint tempering of proper restraint—that completed the establishment of the mental understanding on a satisfactory basis. Both appreciated it the more because they missed it in their wives, in Hennion's case on account of Alice's limitations, in Ude's by reason of Mrs. Ude's superior cleverness, which made him distrust her slightly.

Their alliance, in which each respected scrupulously the other's individuality, gave them a mutual sense of efficiency. Characteristically, they were not much disturbed by an unexpected settlement of the matter in hand.

There appeared as if by a Greek miracle one morning, an Amazon nearly six feet tall, in a bonnet lined with mauve, who laid hold upon the poet and bore him off in a cab. Her invasion threw him into a kind of fatalistic catalepsy, and in explanation he said only:

"C'est Ernestine," as one might observe, with a slow wave of the hand, "It is Nemesis."

To the two men, familiar with conjugal phenomena, he was more human in his departure than ever before. Under the scathing eye of the huge female his peacock's tail folded and fell ignominiously. Evidently Ernestine knew his intimate prosaic necessities: the state of his digestive tract, and the date when he must change the weight of his underwear or catch cold. His peacockings were mere embroidery; she viewed him as a man neither more nor less eccentric than most, to be managed, exploited and petted. He might permissibly amuse himself for a week or two, but a serious deviation was out of the question. Her attitude made it clear that she did not approve of Ware as a moral influence. The bread-winner must return to the business of life.

Hennion and Ude exchanged the glances of husbands, and a few congratulatory words. The former took a soothing turn among his landscapes, preparatory to screwing up the rents in tenements on East Street. The latter decided, after some thought, that it might be well to point a moral gently to his daughter, though he was averse from that form of parental self-indulgence as a habit.

The chance came while his wife was busy with her endless care of her mother, and Sheila, in pale blue with stockings and new slippers to match, awaited the call of an escort. She went out a great deal—too often and too carelessly, it seemed vaguely to her father. He was surprised that Alice allowed it, but so far as he could discover, Alice herself was in doubt. There were long consultations about it on the third floor, in the Victorian language. Madame Lucretia, still capable at that time of the forms of argument, protested; but apparently there was no objection to radical discipline. Customs really were changing. Girls were going out more freely. Sheila must be given the advantages that her friends had. It was hard to decide where to draw the line.

The girl sat quietly, glancing now and then without nervousness at the clock, and slowly working smooth, with the universal motions, the fingers of her long gloves. She was very dainty, unusually well-poised. Hennion had increasing difficulty, on such occasions, in realizing that she was his daughter. Here was a personality that he had seen develop day by day, had helped to form; and yet suddenly it was something individual, without relation to him, and he did not know it at all.

What on earth did she think about, and why? And why was she beautiful, instead of ugly? He might easily have had an ugly daughter, he supposed; Gayley had one with a birth-mark. What would he have done if Sheila had looked like Etta Gayley? Advised her to study for a Ph.D., no doubt. Fortunately, he did not have that sort of

thing to worry about; the child was perfect.

"My dear," he said briskly, "did it occur to you at all that you were a little unwise in seeing quite so much of Wrightstone?"

"Why, Father! Poor old Paul! What harm could it do to see him?"

"Well . . . it would have made a good deal of talk if it had gone on any longer."

"Everything makes talk now, Father. It would make talk if a girl didn't do anything."

"But you aren't in a very pleasant position now, are you?"

She stared at him, then laughed with a clear trill.

"Why? Do you mean, about Ernestine? I've always known about her. He told me the second time he ever talked to me. He said she'd come sooner or later—she always does. So I wasn't surprised."

He marveled.

"Have you any idea—" he began.

Sheila sprang up, and came to poise on the arm of his chair, touching him with the lightest of caresses, bringing to his middle age Youth's magical atmosphere.

"Dearest Father, I know quite all that's necessary to know about her, and about Paul. There are lots of different kinds of men: men a girl likes, and men she dances with, and the man she marries. She doesn't get them mixed up if she is clever, do you see? And she has to be clever, to get on at all. So you needn't have worried about Paul. He isn't the kind of man a girl marries."

He did not know what to say, and she stood up, straightening her dress.

"Life's a funny thing, isn't it?" she said after a moment. "Why is it that people who are good seem to be always looking for bad things, and people who have been bad try to find the good ones? You and everyone else thought that Paul was trying to hurt me, and all the while he was just being good to me! All he wants is to be good, and people won't let him; they always expect him to be bad, because he has been bad, like a little boy

in a mud puddle. That's all he is, just an old little boy. You'd like him if you knew him."

The doorbell rang, and in a moment or two she was off, to a chorus of gay calls and laughter, leaving him with the feeling of helplessness that he had often had in dealing with Malcolm. He was not conscious of age, yet the younger generation outstripped him. What precocity! He could not measure its gambols from innocence to cynicism and back again. There were no reserves or definite rules of conduct except those of expediency. It was life with the background left out. What would remain for these boys and girls when they were fifty? They could not all die young.

Many times in the course of the two years following that scene, he had had occasion to wonder if Sheila was in love with Scaramond. She heard from him, saw him sometimes; so much he knew.

But she had a hundred admirers and several serious suitors, of whom two, a lawyer and a broker, were in the lead. He thought that the broker stood the best chance. He was in a better position to marry than the lawyer, and Alice was definitely on his side. Hennion disliked him—a pushing fellow, he thought, with the hide of a rhinoceros—but he was determined not to betray himself. His interference would accomplish nothing, and the thing that mattered was Sheila's happiness.

Yes, that was what mattered. He and Alice were middle-aged, the ancient remnant in the chamber above was gasping out her last sighs; Malcolm was launched for good or evil—they could do nothing more for him. Only the beautiful girl, who by some strange whim of inexorable destiny had come into being through their agency, was of consequence now. Let all eight of the remaining *Cercle* organisms cease to function at the same time, if they liked. Old people were of no moment, their day was past, and the middle-aged thought too much about money. This one girl, so fair, so precocious, so dangerously alive, was worth more than all

the gray heads and bent brows in the world. A savage anger rose in him against his wife, for her preoccupation with the dust of the grave . . . He controlled it.

CHAPTER VI

IN the street below, a taxi drew up and the young broker, Walmsford, sprang out with a suitor's activity, and assisted Sheila, who had in her arms a great cluster of May lilacs. His manner seemed proprietary. He posed and gyrated, but Sheila wasted no time on the sidewalk. She ran like a lilac streamer up the steps, and her father heard her pass back through the house on a search for a place to put the flowers.

He went into the hall, and down the narrow stairs. The couple were in the dining-room, laughing and squabbling in voices that rose and fell as the owners remembered or forgot the sickness in the house. The front door, left ajar, had drifted open. He stepped out on the porch.

The maples were in full leaf, but they were so tall—and the elms beyond them even taller—that his view of Stan-dish Street and Whitemarsh Avenue was clear. He knew every detail of the neighbourhood, could have built up a history of each family. Miss Sarah Fothergill, across the street, opened her front door, as she did every evening at twilight, and looked too early for the boy who delivered the *Messenger*. She was an old maid, with curls. Her father and mother were dead, but Hennion remembered exactly how they had looked for twenty years, and the brand of whiskey old George Fothergill drank, and how red his neck was, like a turkey cock's wattles. In the house there was a gold dinner service, given to a diplomatic ancestor by an emperor. Miss Sarah's yellow cat stepped deliberately out beside her, affectionately rubbing the black stuff of her dress against her lean calves, and he remembered a succession of yellow cats, all rubbing against Fothergill dresses or trousers.

There must have been hundreds of them, perhaps thousands, counting those drowned in infancy. It was astonishing how many Fothergills and yellow cats could live and die, or move away, in a couple of decades.

Some of the houses on the Avenue had changed ownership. Sam Soates, the hardware magnate, had bought the old Longworthy mansion and converted it into a species of near-ducal palace. It was a bitter day for the Oligarchy when he first tooled his dashing four-in-hand up the sacred way and descended to possession of the premises held so long by Loton J. Longworthy, a guardian pillar of the Avenue's gate. Once a year Judge Longworthy, with his contemporary, William Henry Harrison St. James, had stretched a chain from curb to curb, and let it stay an hour, to prove the way a private one, no vulgar city thoroughfare. Now there were no Longworthys left in Ware, and the St. James place was in use by a finishing school for girls.

The time was not far off when the last remnants of the old régime would be engulfed in the neurotic modern advance, and the Avenue flooded by persons of whose names no Longworthy had heard the sound. There would be pawnbrokers and soap manufacturers on every corner. The last survivors of the Oligarchy would gradually be driven to a refuge colony which was being formed in a quiet district far out on Noble Road, beyond the taint of commerce . . . With active pleasure springing from his mood he pictured his own house, the Ark of the Kinnicutts, sold and perhaps converted into a students' boarding-house. They would pierce the walls for extra windows, and raze or shift partitions, and redecorate. There was vindictiveness in the thought; the house had been a zealous tyrant.

He had still a half-hour before the seven o'clock New England supper. He went back into the hall and took his last year's straw from the black-walnut hat rack between Generals Washington and Grant. Passing down the steps, he made a mental note, mechanically, to

have the ivy trimmed back; it had climbed the iron railing and was beginning to flow over the granite treads. The air was warm—too warm for May. There would be a thunderstorm.

He turned the corner of the Avenue, saluting the two Warrener "girls," sixty-year-old nieces of the tottering *Cercle* survivor. They peered at him with a shrouded curiosity, but he made no sign except the bow.

The word "Ghouls!" shot into his mind. Were they haunting the neighbourhood of death like ill-omened birds? They looked not unlike ravens, with their uncanny beady eyes and black dresses falling straight as plumage to within an inch or two of abnormally narrow feet. They were celebrants of an enforced chastity, dreary virgins whom no man had desired to approach. Existing in a half-light, sustained by tea, black walnut and gentility, they had culled little from life, poor souls, save a thin greed. What benefit would the money bring them if it came? They could have more tea, and elaborate funerals. A story existed about a previous Warrener funeral—some tale of a rebellious corpse . . . No matter.

As he neared the white façade of the Ude house, he saw Horace standing on the porch, debating with himself the probability of the shower, and no doubt as much concerned about damage to a few porch cushions, if it rained, as though he had not had four millions and a dying father.

"You know, I don't very much care whether it does or not," he said surprisingly when they met.

"Does what? Rains?"

"Yes. Will you come in? No? Well, let's walk a little way up the Avenue. That magnolia over there is wonderful, isn't it? I wish I had one like it, but you can't buy them, you have to grow them, like an English lawn . . . Does the Spring seem to you to be extraordinarily beautiful this year?"

Hennion stared at him covertly. He had on a new suit of gray clothes, and carried a stick—was almost rakish.

"I don't know. I don't suppose I'm

feeling very pristine. The old lady, you know. How's your father?"

"The same. Very bad." Horace did not notice the bluntness of the question. "I doubt if he lasts more than twenty-four hours. He's conscious, but Munn says any little shock . . . Hennion, have you ever felt like letting go?—I know you have—cutting out this sort of thing, I mean, and really living. We're only half alive, you and I."

"That's true enough. But I'm fifty-six years old.

Ude swung his stick recklessly.

"I'm fifty-three, but I don't feel old. I feel as though I had missed something. You know, I never did have what they call a young man's fling. My father frightened all the spirit out of me. Perhaps that's it. Or is it just human nature? Today, absurd as it may seem, I could almost sympathize with that fellow Wrightstone, that coon-song shouter. He gets some joy out of life, anyway."

So little Horace had it too, the regret for China lost, the urge to spread the arms and embrace adventure. Suppressed and miserly, and fifty-three years old, he wanted to sail a ship—search for Spanish treasure, cock a wicked trigger, rescue at the rapier's point some frail fair one from the pirates' grasp. It was ridiculous, like an old horse prancing, but it was valid. The romantic impulse never died.

"What are you going to do?" Hennion asked curiously.

"Do? Nothing! Go back and figure rents, and wait for my father to die. I can't do anything, of course. I'm committed to a system, just as you are. I shall live on, just as I am living, to my appointed end—and die like Elias—only less noisily, I hope."

It was a more intimate conversation, probably, than Ude had ever held with anyone before. He was a man who loved caution, concealment, the stealthy approach. To no one but his friend would he have divulged the other side of his character in definite words, and not to him if he had not guessed the existence in him of a similar feeling. Chance—

the Spring, the magnolia—had opened a door. He closed it quickly.

"I had a small amount of money in Russian loans," he said. "I have been getting it out. No man's money will be safe over there in a few months."

They walked to the head of the Avenue, discussing the European war-cloud of the period. When they turned back they saw coming toward them on the half-run a woman's figure with crossed apron-strings.

"Why, that's Margaret!" Hennion exclaimed. "The old lady must be worse."

They walked quickly, and Alice's Irish maid met them.

"Ye're wanted at home, Misther Hennion. Th' docthor sez she's very bad."

CHAPTER VII

BREATH still came and went in the body. The nurse and Hennion remained in the death chamber, and the doctor came twice.

Alice, completely shattered by vigils, was carried rather than persuaded to her bed, where she lay under Sheila's care until an injection took effect.

Dim lights burned through the house. Flitting between rooms on the first and second floors were several ghostly cousins of the Kinnicutt blood, not only injured to death, but deriving from it a melancholy satisfaction.

The Irish maid Margaret, rocking to and fro in a corner with her apron over her head, was with difficulty restrained from keening before the time was ripe. Malcolm had not been summoned; he could have done nothing, and had a frank pagan hate for dissolution.

Hennion sat in an alcove with his thoughts. There was nothing to await except the cessation of the senseless sounds from the great shadowy bed. Each breath was so amazingly long drawn out that there seemed no possibility of another; and the resumption of the effort, after a breathless pause, produced a shock. The fascinated cousins padded softly to the closed door at intervals. They could be heard whisper-

ing and scurrying away, like rats behind a wainscot.

The only fascination for the watcher was in wonder that a mere physical formality, a phenomenon of lungs laboring without volition, could affect so many persons. The nurse moved like all the nurses in the world, tending her charge. Munn, the doctor, was professional in manner on the first visit, humanly weary on the second.

"She's about gone," he said, yawning. "Miss Scads knows what to do."

He was right in both assertions.

At the mysterious hour following dawn, when there was no sound from the world outside, and footfalls within the house had ceased, the last struggle took place and the grotesque breathing stopped. There was a void—nothingness.

"What time is it?" Hennion asked heavily.

The nurse told him efficiently that it was four forty-seven, and leaned over the body.

He went to his library and smoked half of a cigar, which had no taste.

Returning, he met Miss Scads in the hall. Her hand was on the doorknob; she had just left the death-chamber. She halted.

"Don't you want to look at Madam Kinnicutt?" she asked, with an explosion of strong white teeth in a bright smile. "She looks very peaceful."

"Good God, no!" he said, more loudly than he intended. "I've looked at her enough. *Requiescat in pace*. I hope I sha'n't have to die like that."

His thought was that he would prefer to die violently, like his parents, no matter how lancinating the shock, rather than drag out a slow end; but the scandalized Miss Scads, not knowing his reaction, thought him merely brutal.

Realizing that he was faint from want of food, he started downstairs, to forage for crackers in the dining-room pantry. He dreaded an encounter with a wandering cousin or family friend, or with the emotional Maggie, but there was no one. Exhaustion had laid them low, and the climax, a mere cessation, had come so quietly that even the professional

mourners were caught unawares. To awaken Alice would have been pointless; he had told Miss Scads to let her sleep while she could.

He fumbled in the dimness below, upset a sauce-dish, found the crackers. The crackers raised his spirits. They were soggy, but they sustained. He poured out a glassful of water that had once been iced, and discovered three pickles and a piece of hard cheese. A section of stale cake made almost a meal.

As he stood munching appreciatively, a draught from the lower hall struck him. The front door—it was the second time he had found it left open. Munn's carelessness this time, probably.

He moved along the hall, still munching, then stoppeed stock-still.

There were voices in the vestibule, very low, a man's and a woman's. The woman's voice was Sheila's, but when had he heard that note before?

His memory groped, and then flashed back to the scene more than thirty years before, when he had surprised his father and mother in their sorrow. His mother's voice had been like that. Or was his imagination playing him tricks, in the excitement? He had thought of his mother and father only a little while before, in connection with death. . . .

The voice ran on, on the low, sobbing note, and the man's voice countered. They were saying good-bye. He heard the name "Paul." Sheila repeated it twice, and with an odd sense of regret—mingled with shame for the egotism of the feeling—he realized that his own name had never been spoken by a woman in that way. His daughter was saying good-bye—not good-night—to the man she loved. She was twenty and he was fifty-six, and there had never been anything in his life so vivid as the colour, for her lover, in her voice.

She came into the hall, and closed the door.

He stood looking at her, holding in his hand the small remainder of the stale cake. She had been crying, but she was not startled or embarrassed.

"Your grandmother has been dead an hour," he said stupidly.

"I'm glad it's over. Does mother know?"

"Not yet. She's asleep still."

"I'll tell her when she wakes up." She approached and stood close, without touching him. "Father, I'm going to marry Charley Walmsford. I like him, and we shall get on all right, and not get into any messes, or be queer, like Malcolm. That man who was with me just now was Paul Wrightstone. I couldn't leave the house, and I had to see him before he went away—he's going this morning. "I telephoned to him."

Hennion brushed these details aside with a gesture of which he was unconscious. She seemed to him the loveliest thing in the world, this girl who happened to be his daughter, and he did not know how to help her.

"Wouldn't it be possible—couldn't you marry him?" he asked, feeling his own clumsiness.

"Paul? Not possible, dear. He couldn't desert Ernestine entirely, and there's a wife in Omaha who won't divorce him. And he isn't quite big enough to make it worth while to run away with him and make everybody else unhappy and perhaps him and me too. He isn't really a genius, you know—he's just Paul, just a dear old playboy. And you and mother have had enough to bear, and I—well, I like money and clothes, and—and a certain amount of respectability. I suppose. It couldn't be done. Paul knows."

This seemed to him to be quicksand.

"And are you quite fair to Walmsford?"

She met his look fairly, but with the cynicism of the younger generation.

"Charley and I understand each other. Don't worry, Father, it will be all right. Only I can't see Paul any more." She caught her breath in a sob, like a little girl. "He's a weak brother, but you don't know how good he's been to me!"

The younger generation was definitely beyond him. It had the passion, but had it the endurance? The current of its passion changed from depths to shallows too rapidly, running strongly in the channel, but never getting far away from

cynical shoals. Sheila was right; it would be madness for her to make a pact with the poet. But he knew that his mother, if she had loved a man like Wrightstone enough to use that voice in speaking to him, would have followed him into darkness if she could not bring him up to the light. True, his mother would not have loved a Wrightstone, but if she had—

The argument was profitless. He was a sentimental anachronism, fortunate in having a daughter who had common sense.

"Your mother knows of your engagement?" he asked.

"Oh, surely. You know Charley makes as much of a hit with her as he does with me."

He turned away, wincing a little.

Apparently he was the only member with whom the ubiquitous Charley had not made a hit. Possibly his turn would come. He visualized his future efforts to get on smoothly with the thick-skinned young man, whose every act, so far, had gone against the grain. He was more determined than ever to have no ill-feeling, let patience cost him what it might.

The day had broken clearly, the sun was up, and from regions above, the tread of Maggie, hushed but ponderous, could be heard descending cautiously. Her brogue asked a question of Miss Scads, whose efficiency must have brought her to the danger-spot. A Celtic wail was threatened, then stifled aborning. The tread came on, accompanied by a pious mutter. Soon the cousins would be at attention, the news would spread, and the house be decked with the trappings and paraphernalia of grief, physical and spiritual.

He opened the front door again, and stood in the pale, early sunlight, drawing in the fresh air of the morning. Doctor Munn, haggard despite a resurrection of the professional manner, swung up in his roadster and mounted the steps.

"Has she gone?"

Hennion nodded, and the other, dropping again the medical mask, leaned

against a post and looked at him with insolent curiosity.

"What time?" he asked.

"Four forty-seven by the nurse's watch. Why?"

"Old man Ude stopped at five-fourteen, that's all. I thought you might be interested, as a friend of Horace's. I'll drop in later. Good-bye."

So Elias had kept his word. The news did not bulk very large to Hennion, for he had never expected his mother-in-law to win, and in his shock at the detail of her death, and his preoccupation of the last hour with Sheila's affair, the *Cercle* had been forgotten. But it was wildly ironical that she should have failed to cop—as Malcolm would have had it—by scarcely more than a quarter-hour. He thought that the feminine mind, unused to philosophical acceptance of the miss-and-mile doctrine, would take the loss unkindly.

He was wrong. However desirous Alice had been, in her secret way, of the relief that the inheritance would have given, she was too much overcome by the loss of her mother and her own prostration to worry much about it immediately; and after the funeral—which she passed through in a kind of trance—she fell easily into an attitude of resignation.

"You'll have to take care of mother now, dearie," she told Sheila. "She's an old woman now, slipping down the hill of life. I suppose we may as well sell the dear old home, for there'll be nobody to use it when you're married, and your father and I can move into a flat—though I always said I'd never live in one. But I shall want to see a great deal of you—you're all I have left, you know, with Malcolm gone."

It seemed to Hennion, listening to her prattle, that to attempt to consider a woman as an individual, apart from her family, was futile. She was not an individual; she was a link in an endless chain of mothers and daughters, each of whom depended on the one before and the one behind, and was depended on by them. Mother and daughter exhausted and supported each other, and when one passed beyond the turn of the wheel, the strain fell on the next in line. She whose mother had burdened her, frequently became a burden on her own daughter. Together they formed a barrier, which men could not break through or even understand. In the ultimate test they had held together like a solid cable, from the days of the Mysteries. They formed a universal mystery, not to be solved . . . Between Alice and Sheila, the Tree and the Fruit, he was as nothing, an atom carried by a gust. They were the rulers, the banded women.

But again his thought was wrong, or incomplete. For with an indescribable gesture of trust, and with the placid confidence of years shining mildly in her blue eyes, which seemed to have faded several shades, his wife laid her hand affectionately on his, and said to Sheila:

"We are just two old people now, your father and I—just two old people going down the hill together. We must be good to each other."

She needed him; he was after all the head of the family. He began unconsciously to preen. And when Alice patted his hand gently again, he detected no sarcasm—and indeed none was intended—in her comfortable words:

"Good old John!"

(Finis)



The Damned Nigger

By *Emanie N. Sachs*

"HAVE you brought me my hot-water bottle, 'Lizbeth Ann?" the woman called from her bed. It was a large mahogany four-poster, a relic of better days, and seemed to point in scorn to the dingy, greenish brown wall-paper that surrounded it. No more did its upper frame enclose snowy pleated white muslin. It yawned, an open cavity, through which could be seen a fly-specked ceiling—once white, but now spotted with the leaks of numerous rains.

"Coming, Mother," answered a patient quiet voice. A careful listener could have detected an undertone of persistent youth.

'Lizbeth Ann held the water-bottle to her cheek to test its warmth, as she came into the room. She was a colourless little person, with regular features, mouth a trifle small, and chin receding slightly, in the graceful profile line of a Botticelli Madonna. Her eyes were nice and brown. She made one think irresistibly of a white waxen candle that has yet to be touched by a match before it melts into flame.

"Are you sure you don't mind my going, Mother? Jemmy will come right back after taking me to the Temples'. He'll stay in the kitchen until time to fetch me home. He'll really be within call, almost all the time. But,—if you are the least bit nervous, I won't—"

"I guess I'll be all right," interrupted Mrs. Munford. "A mother is called upon to make sacrifices every day of the year. You're twenty-five now, and I didn't like the way Sarah Temple talked about never seeing you around with the young people. 'Tisn't likely you'd be asked to the subscription dances, where

a boy has to pay to take a girl,—you might as well enjoy the invited kind, where it's nothing to talk about if nobody sees you home. I can remember the time when they couldn't have a dance in Bingham County without a Munford planning everything from the punch to the music, but times have changed."

Mrs. Munford sighed voluminously and stretched her thin feet to meet the comforting warmth of the hot-water bottle.

"Just hand me my spectacles and the *Christian Times* and fix the light so it shines over my left shoulder. Lands, Jemmy will have to fix this table again. It will hardly hold the lamp."

"Is that all, Mother?"

The girl paused in the doorway. Her newly laundered organdy—a hand-me-down from a prosperous Louisville cousin—showed stiff angles in the dim light.

"Good-night, dear. I won't wake you when I come in."

She fixed the door so it would stay slightly ajar.

"Jem," she called, "I'm ready. I'll get my coat in the hall as we go out."

"Yas'm, Miss 'Lizbeth Ann. I'se ready. Come on chile, so's I kin git back ter yo' maw."

Jem hurried out in the hall, a slender, wiry negro, with the high cheek bones and wide-apart brown eyes of his race. His hair was short and kinky, but his mouth and nose were not in the generous proportions of the negro who runs true to type.

Jem had joined the Munford household when its prosperity was already on the wane. Colonel Munford had suc-

cumbed to the proverbial handsome stranger selling bogus mining certificates and was trying to preserve the remains of the family fortune in alcohol, taken inwardly. The servants having departed unpaid, Mrs. Munford welcomed the little negro boy who came to the back door one day suggesting that he work for his food and lodging. Jemmy was an orphan with no family ties, and quickly adopted the Munford clan. He proved to be slave, guide, philosopher and friend to 'Lizbeth Ann. He saved her life one day, when she waded out beyond her depth and his in Bracken Creek. As neither knew how to swim, perhaps a kindly current should have received its share of the gratitude that was bestowed upon Jemmy when he staggered under the weight of the wet, limp little bundle that he handed to the mother. He was Mrs. Munford's only assistant in nursing Colonel Munford through his last illness. He had an amazing pride in "Us Munfords," and laughed to scorn the more opulent negroes who jeered at his willingness to stay in a sinking ship, when so many thriving yachts were to be boarded for the asking.

"Yas, yo' gits high wages wukin' fo' white trash. I'd ruther wuk fo' a Munford, I had! I ain't no need tuh wear no swell braggin' clothes. I'se a Munford, I is somebody. I don' have ter put on fine clothes ter make folks think I've jes arrived at bein' somebody!" he would say.

"Honey, yo' don' mind walkin' a little faster. I don' wan' yo' maw ter git fidgety—'cos I don' wan' her ter have no unpleasant memories of this time ter make her say no, nex' time."

"There won't be many next times, Jemmy," said 'Lizbeth Ann. "I was only asked to fill in tonight. So many girls went to the house-party in Perkinsville, there weren't enough girls to go around. Mary Hayes got her invitation a week before mine came."

"Now, don' you talk that away. How many times have I tole you—youse a Munford, daughter of Colonel Henry Amos Munford, the last Munford in Bingham County. Here we are now.

Have a good time and catch the best beau going."

And Jem held the big iron gate open for 'Lizbeth Ann to walk through and then turned and went off in a fast trot down the dusty road.

The girl stopped a moment, in the shadows of the double line of sugar maples that skirted the brick walk leading to the fine old Colonial house. There was a hopeless look in her brown eyes. Then her head went up, her shoulders back, and she continued on her way.

Mrs. Temple was standing by the door.

"Howdy, 'Lizbeth Ann," she welcomed cordially. "How's your mother? So glad you could come."

She looked at the clock and then at 'Lizbeth Ann who, true to wall-flower traditions, had come five minutes ahead of time.

Soon the young people began to arrive, a laughing, bantering group. 'Lizbeth Ann was pushed back in a corner, where she found Mrs. Temple's mother watching the festivities with a benignant smile. The orchestra began playing and old Mrs. Enderson tapped her foot in strict time with the music. The couples swung out upon the shining floor.

None of the young men noticed 'Lizbeth Ann Munford. Ralph Gayle came toward their corner and smiled a greeting and the girl started forward on her chair in eager expectancy, but he went blithely past to a red-haired girl on the other side. Several extra men were standing around. They looked at 'Lizbeth Ann as if she were part of the furniture and went into the library to smoke. She began to talk very animatedly to old Mrs. Enderson, while she watched the other girls accept more partners than they could manage. Some of them were interrupted time after time by men "breaking in."

And so the evening passed. Every now and then someone would start toward them, but his destination was always elsewhere. Mrs. Enderson went to bed and 'Lizbeth Ann wandered over to the window to look for Jemmy. Late in the evening, she had one dance. Nell

Grace's husband, famous for his clumsy feet, had been refused by all the other girls.

"Did yo have a good time, Mis' 'Lizabeth Ann?" asked Jemmy on the way home.

"No, Jemmy. No one wants to dance with me. I had a miserable time—just miserable—"

There was a catch in her voice. "I know it's silly to care, but I c-can't help it."

"There, there, Honey, you wait. White men's jes' like sheep. Long some 'un'll come and fin' out how beautiful yo' is and every one of 'em 'll break they necks ter foller. Jes' yo' wait. You ain't no flashy kind to 'tract every Tom, Dick an' Harry!"

II

A FEW weeks later, when 'Lizabeth Ann received an invitation to the Gayle's dance she told her mother that she did not want to go.

"They don't want me, Mother. I don't fit in. I belong here—taking care of you."

"Nonsense! You are growing into an old maid. The Munfords have always married early and well. You've been sticking around the house too much. Of course you had to take care of your mother and you haven't been able to gad about, but I haven't had a heart attack this spring and I don't want to listen to any more of Sarah Temple's insinuations."

Cousin Alice Clayton, in Louisville, had been unusually generous. There was a yellow chiffon that suited 'Lizabeth Ann wonderfully. It softened all the angles and brought out the tenderness of her brown eyes and the sheen of her light brown hair. 'Lizabeth Ann nodded approvingly at her reflection in the large mirror in the Gayles' front hall. However, there were no approving glances from anyone else. No one was in the habit of noticing her. She looked around for a secluded corner. There were two or three girls talking excitedly in front of her.

"Who is he? He's marvelous looking!"

'Lizabeth Ann looked too. He was handsome, a tall, dark stranger, talking gracefully to Mrs. Gayle.

"I know who he is. He's a lawyer for the Grantland estate, and he's from New York. His name is Roger Dane, and he's going to be down here for several months. Isn't it great to have a brand-new man in town!" gurgled Marion Post, a plump partridge of a girl, with glistening eyes.

But the Ugly Duckling carried away the Prince, to the utter amazement of the company and the uttermost amazement of the Ugly Duckling herself.

He began by asking Mrs. Gayle to introduce him to the little daffodil-girl in yellow, and taking hold of her program, he covered it with bold black crosses. Jemmy's prophesy came true and 'Lizabeth Ann was almost the belle of the evening. No more did she search in vain for something—anything—to say, while her mind felt like lumpy white wool. She found that she could talk and laugh about nothing as well as the rest of them. Her feet no longer dragged in miserable fear that she was taking the wrong steps, but all the time she was dancing with Ralph Gayle, and Henry Temple and Wallace Enderson, she was watching the Prince and, curiously enough, he seemed to be watching her. Their eyes met over their partners' shoulders; her face was softly flushed continuously.

As it grew later, he said,

"Come out on the porch and look at the moon with me. We rarely see the moon in New York."

"Yes, but you see bright lights and people. We get a little tired of the moon, here. I'd like to see Broadway and traffic policemen, and things."

"I think we'll do without the traffic policemen. You're likely to see them at the wrong time. I'd like to show you Broadway at night and Fifth Avenue in the day-time. But, now you must show me every nook and cranny of Sunnydale."

'Lizabeth Ann didn't answer, but if

the moonlight had been less mellow and more brilliant, Roger Dane would have seen swift tears in her eyes; the kind of illogical tears that fill the eyes of happy women who are seeing their dreams begin to come true.

People were starting to leave. They could hear Mrs. Gayle saying many times over, "So glad you came. So glad you enjoyed it," and different voices repeating, "Such a lovely party," or "I had such a good time."

And then, a couple who didn't see them in the recess of the porch, commented on the event of the evening.

"Say, Sue, what did you think of 'Lizbeth Ann Munford running away with the prize beau? Reckon you girls are jealous. But, oh boy—that girl looked pretty tonight! Funny none of us ever noticed it before. She's such a quiet little thing."

"Well, I must say I don't begrudge him to her. Poor girl, she's had an awful life, waiting on her mother hand and foot and never a bit of fun."

"Still, I've seen her at dances."

"Yes, siting by herself, or with the chaperones, in hideous dresses that took away every trace of good looks. I never saw her in yellow before, and I am going to—"

They had moved off, in the distance, and 'Lizbeth Ann was looking at Roger Dane in miserable silence.

"Isn't it funny," he said, "how true the old saying is about prophets in their own country? I never saw a small town yet that didn't overlook its one best bet."

Jemmy came around the side of the house, and stood respectfully within call.

The girl jumped up from her chair.

"There's Jemmy, he's come to take me home, Mr. Dane."

"Suppose we send your factotum on ahead. It's a shame to miss this gorgeous moonlight. Hey, George," he called, "I'm going to take Miss Munford home. You run on ahead and here's something for your trouble."

Jemmy, coming early, had heard the kitchen gossip about the hit his young

mistress was making with the New York man, and had been largely superior about it.

"Huh," he had remarked to the Gayle butler, "Since all this po' white trash has sprung up round heah lak toadstools, they ain't none of 'em quality enough to 'preciate a Munford. Takes a sho' 'nough pusson from New Yawk to do that. Jes' you wait."

Secure in the knowledge that Miss 'Lizbeth Ann was coming into her own at last, he set off down the road jingling his coin and singing in a minor key:

*"Some folks say the Dummy can't run,
But, jes lemme tell yo' what the
Dummy done done,
It left St. Louis at half-past one,
And got to Nashville 'fore the settin'
o' the sun,
Oh, the Dummy, Oh—Oh—the Dum-
my—"*

III

AND thus began a harvest time for 'Lizbeth Ann. All the bitter, colourless years were soon forgotten. There was no more sitting in secluded corners at dances, unless she and Roger Dane chose to keep themselves in a dark niche of the porch. They were occasionally interrupted by Ralph Gayle who was seeing a new and fascinating person in the yellow-garbed, brilliant-eyed 'Lizbeth Ann.

Yellow organdie and yellow cotton dress-lengths were ordered and sent to the old Munford place, for 'Lizbeth Ann almost superstitiously clung to the colour which shed a glow that made her lovely to the man she patently adored. Fortunately, it was summer and summer materials were cheap.

Mrs. Munford was holding up her head again and even forgot to need her hot-water bag of nights. She could patronize Sarah Temple now, and tell about her daughter's friend from New York, and lightly mention the difficulty of keeping orchids fresh, when they were sent all the way from Cincinnati. One day it became too much for Sarah

Temple and she asked, ever so sweetly: "When are they going to be married?"

But Mrs. Munford airily replied,

"Oh, not for some time yet. I have told my daughter to prolong this beautiful period of courtship as far as possible. The serious business of life comes only too quickly."

"Well, of course I never listen to servants' gossip, but my Aunt Pride's son is the porter at the hotel now, and he says he carries letters in a woman's handwriting to Mr. Dane, and they are postmarked New York."

"My dear Sarah, surely a man who is away from home may be expected to receive letters from a mother or a sister?"

"Y-es," assented Mrs. Temple dubiously.

When she left, however, Mrs. Munford called 'Lizabeth Ann in from the sewing room, where the steady whirr of a sewing-machine testified to her absorption.

"I want to speak to you, my dear, dear little girl. I am very much impressed with Mr. Dane. He appears to be all a loving mother could desire. I hate to think of my baby daughter leaving her mother, although it will be only for the honeymooning time; I intend always to bless your home. But, now tell your own mother, has—has he spoken?"

'Lizabeth Ann had in her hands a flounce of yellow muslin, from which she was removing basting threads, as she stood in front of her mother.

She twisted one corner into a tight little wad. Her eyes filled with tears. She winked them madly and digging her finger-nails into the palms of her hands, she finally conquered.

"Why, Mother, I hadn't thought, yet—it's only been a few months, since I've known him. He seems to care—lots—but—"

"There now, there's plenty of time! I got a letter this morning from Aunt Lucy Clayton in Louisville. She wants me to come up and pay her a visit for a few days. Jemmy can sleep in the attic room again. I haven't been there this

year and we must think ahead—wedding presents, you know," and Mrs. Munford cackled importantly.

The night after she left proved to be one of those magical nights when the moon is at its fullest and the trees look black in contrast. Silver paths seemed to be leading straight to heaven. Roger Dane and 'Lizabeth Ann were sitting out on the porch, saying very little, but their silence was quivering with wonderful things unsaid. Their chairs were close and Roger quietly covered her hand in his, and they sat there for a few minutes—still—and then he murmured:

"Dearest, you look like the lady out of the moon in that yellow dress. You wonderful, wonderful girl! I love you so much, much, much, sweetheart. Do you care, just a tiny bit?"

"Not a tiny bit, but ever and ever so much!"

He started to draw her to him, when the telephone, which is no respecter of occasions, rang out in a shrill clang.

She came back breathless from hurrying.

"It was Ralph Gayle, he wanted us to meet him at the old bridge for a midnight picnic. I told him you'd be here this evening. Just think, it is ten o'clock already."

"Do you want to go?"

"No," she answered shyly, "I think I like it here."

Just then a cricket chirped near by and 'Lizabeth Ann, startled, gave a little cry. Roger Dane drew her to him in a close embrace, so close that she could hardly breathe, but she was past caring for anything but the wonderful kisses that came faster, faster, on her willing lips, each one thrilling to the depths of her being. Surely, she had all her life been waiting for just this.

It grew later and later.

Upstairs, Jemmy, stirring uneasily on his cot in the attic room awakened, when he heard a cock crow, raucously. Little waves of light were shooting up in the East. He yawned and stretched himself and went to the window. He could just see the far end of the front porch below. He started in surprise when he

saw a man's hat on the bench, recognizable as Mr. Dane's.

"Must ha' forgotten it," he mumbled to himself. "It's funny, though."

He peered out the little dormer window again. The hat was gone and there were echoes of departing footsteps on the gravel walk.

Lizbeth Ann was late in coming down for breakfast, and she did not greet Jemmy with customary cheer. Her "Good-morning" had no lilt to it. He looked at her anxiously and brightened when he saw the porter from the Lanston Hotel, where Dane was staying, coming up the steps with a fat-looking letter. Jem could see a familiar handwriting, having often, with a delighted grin, delivered neat little notes from that source to his young mistress. The messenger followed him into the dining-room.

"Howdy, Miss 'Lizbeth Ann. Kin I hav' some o' thet hot coffee? Ain't had time for to hav' no brekfus'—bin helpin' Mr. Dane pack. He done left on the ten o'clock train, he did."

"Left—ten o'clock train—"

Her face turned dead-white and her eyes made Jemmy shiver.

He turned to the boy and said:

"Come on ter the kitchen, nigger. I'll fill yo' big mouth. Guess Mr. Dane done gone ter Louisville ter git one of them fine presents he's been sendin' 'tiss 'Lizbeth Ann. He has to s'lect gifts in pusson fo' a Munford!"

'Lizbeth Ann slowly walked up the stairs to her room. She opened the door and turned the key in the lock and sat down in the little rocking-chair of which she had been so proud on her tenth birthday. There was the letter. She hadn't opened it yet and it was very thick. A little crooning moan escaped her, and then she tore open the envelope.

Dear, dear little Girl," she read, *"How can I ever make you understand? I want you to know that I meant no harm and first of all you must realize that I love you and that is everything, isn't it?"*

You see, little girl, I'm married. I might as well blurt it out, like that. She

doesn't brag about it, my wife—she's too busy with clubs and uplifts and committees. She wouldn't dream of coming away with me on these trips, and sometimes I get so lonesome that life doesn't seem worth living.

That first night, at the dance, when I saw you—sweet and fresh as a daffodil—the first ones in the Spring, in the florists' windows in New York, crowding the orchids out of sight—well, you seemed like something especially sent. A man needs a woman's influence, and my wife—what's the use, we might as well leave her out of this. When I realized that, in Sunnyside, they hadn't seen the wonder of you yet, I thought it would be a joke to wake them up. Good Samaritan stuff; how the gods must have laughed.

Our walks and drives and talks grew more and more wonderful and you—Heart-O'-Mine. You know I have grown to love you. Your eyes, the way your chin tilts—the adorable lift to your eyebrows when you are surprised—but there—I mustn't go on like this, I mustn't think of that last wonderful night, when you proved your love, when the magic—

Catherine, my wife, will greet me, when I get back to New York, with a cool, dutiful kiss, and I will go about my work and my heart will throb painfully with longing—for you—my dear little Daffodil-girl, and my great hope is that you will forgive—for to love is to forgive. My dear, my dear.

Roger.

'Lizbeth Ann put her hand to her throat. It ached dully. Her brain was whirling. She walked over to the window, stumbling over a chair.

"Forgive," she muttered, tonelessly. "Forgive—oh—my God!" And then she murmured wistfully, "If I could only cry—it might help to cry."

There was a knock at the door, gentle and persistent. Jemmy with a yellow envelope—a telegram.

"Ne'mine—Honey—I'll open it fo' yo'—don' yo' bother."

Her hands were trembling so that she

could not get a proper hold on the paper.

Jemmy opened it and held it in front of her eyes.

The black letters danced and glittered. It was hard for her eyes to focus. Finally the words shaped themselves and she read:

"Your mother passed away quietly this morning—heart failure—am coming. Aunt Lucy."

'Lizbeth Ann crumpled slowly and mercifully into a little heap on the floor.

IV

AUNT LUCY wanted to take 'Lizbeth Ann back to Louisville, but she stubbornly refused and the family doctor advised letting things alone for a while.

"I don't like the looks of it," he said. "'Lizbeth Ann has never cried and that's a bad sign. Tears that fall inward make trouble. Let her stay in the old house for a few months. Jemmy will take care of her and housework is a good tonic. Maybe we'll find something else that will effect a cure." And the old doctor glanced significantly across the street where Ralph Gayle was passing by.

No one asked 'Lizbeth Ann about Roger Dane. People took it for granted that she had sent him away, and her mother's death occurring so suddenly hurled everyone's heart out to her in quick sympathy. Ralph Gayle was often seen on his way to and from the Munford place, and the village gossips smiled benignantly and waited for news.

'Lizbeth Ann went about her work mechanically, with a hunted expression in her eyes, keeping the old house scrupulously clean. One day she decided to straighten out the attic. In a corner, under the eaves, she found an old trunk and brushing off some sticky spider webs, she opened it. Inside, a pasteboard box disclosed an infant's layette of finest, softest white. Around the little garments was fastened a band of faded pink ribbon, upon which was pinned a label, "'Lizbeth Ann's outfit," written in her mother's handwriting.

Each small article was carefully handmade, in the kind of tiny even stitches that show an accompaniment of happy dreams in the sewing.

'Lizbeth Ann put them gently back into the box and the trunk lid fell with a dull thud, which coincided with a wave of foreboding that came over her, a crystallization of her consuming fear.

"I am glad Mother died," she whispered.

Her breath began to come in frightened pants.

The telephone rang out—homely, reassuring. Probably Ralph. Her face lighted and she rushed downstairs.

"Hello, this is Ralph. I'm coming to take you out for a little drive this afternoon. Will you go?"

"Yes," she answered faintly.

"I have something to tell you, something important. Can't be told over the 'phone. Oh, 'Lizbeth Ann, old Mr. Harbisson says this is the earliest spring in the history of Sunnysdale. We will try to find a pussywillow this afternoon, and before we know it the daffodils will be out. Do you know, I always call you my daffodil-girl to my—Hello—Hello—Central—you cut us off. Damn it! Please ring 402. They don't answer? The party cut off? That's funny, I'll have to see about it!"

A way out had occurred to 'Lizbeth Ann. Life was too big a battle for her to fight any longer. She went to the old desk in the corner and opened the drawer. There was the Colonel's ancient pistol of which her mother used to be afraid; still, she had always been too nervous to be without a loaded pistol in the house. It was unwieldy and heavy. 'Lizbeth Ann lifted it awkwardly and prayed a little. When she came to the word, "Forgive" she muttered pitifully,— "Dear God, can't you see? There's no other way. All the words haunt me—"

A shot rang out, bringing Jemmy running in from the garden.

"Lawdy, Miss 'Lizbeth Ann, Honey, what yo' done, what yo' done!"

His face was gray with terror, that

sickly gray that only a black negro can turn.

'Lizbeth Ann was drawing back the hammer of the pistol for another trial. He caught hold of her bleeding arm and they struggled—drawing excited, sobbing breaths.

He tried in vain to unlock the slender fingers that clutched the handle of the gun. She fought him off with superhuman strength, tearing one sleeve out of her dress. Finally she managed to point the barrel at her heart. She pulled the trigger.

"No other way out, Jemmy—best—fix it—somehow—otherwise disgrace—you know—Roger"—and then the brown eyes took on a dreadful stare. There was a little click in the pretty white throat and that was all.

Jemmy knelt there, moaning and crying. Gradually he felt something warm and sticky flowing over his hands. Miss 'Lizbeth Ann's blood. He jumped up in utter terror. Someone was coming through the hall.

Ralph Gayle came into the room and saw the dead girl lying on the floor—in ghastly disarray—the pistol and Jemmy's blood-stained hands.

He put his own hands to his eyes first and tried not to look, and then his overwhelming grief lost itself in overwhelming rage:

"My God! You damned nigger!"

Jemmy shrank back before the awful accusation in the white man's eyes.

"Lawdy, Mr Ralph, yo' don' think—yo' can't think that—that I—Lawdy—"

and then those last words of 'Lizbeth Ann's rang in his ears—the last words of the last Munford—"Fix it—somehow—otherwise disgrace."

Ralph was feeling hopelessly for a pulse that was still

Jemmy glanced out of the window. The sun was shining brightly and a bird came and perched on a branch near the window, and burst into a joyous song, a verp pæan to the beauty of life. Then he glanced at the dead girl.

"Yassa, Massa, yassa, I'se a rotten nigger! Kill me, Massa! I 'ont want ter live noways!"

"I'd like to throttle you with my bare hands—but *we have a better way for your kind!* I'll be back for you."

Gayle turned the key in the lock as he went out to spread the news that one more negro had committed the crime unspeakable. And so it was written in the book of Fate that 'Lizbeth Ann Munford should go down in the annals of Sunnydale, not as a Magdalen, but as a martyr.

In that room of awful tragedy, Jemmy waited. The dead girl's eyes looked into his. He shut them gently, and over his face crept a look of brooding care.

"Ne'mine—Honey, I fixed it. Jemmy fixed it all right," he whispered.

Outside, he heard the gathering of men; gradually more and more were surrounding the house. There was the sound of many voices—voices loud, angry and excited, growing into the ominous roar of a mob, fully roused, growling for its prey.



TO register indifference with some degree of perfectness, one must be in love.



A WOMAN often tells the truth to lie out of an embarrassing situation.



His Honeymoon*

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I

"**Y**OU do love me, don't you? Love me much as ever?"

"Of course I do."

Duane Blair tried to make his answer as hearty and sentimental as possible, as enthusiastic and sincere, even, as his answer to the same question had been three weeks before.

He was afraid that it sounded just a trifle inadequate. He put his arm around the pleasant, slender shoulder of his wife and kissed the full, prettily rouged lips that were held up to him.

"Of course I love you as much as ever," he added, the necessary ardour helped out, just a trifle, with patience.

But even as he said the words Duane knew that he wasn't telling the truth. What a man he was! He despised himself for it, though that didn't seem to help. Here he was married, actually married to Lavinia, and he felt just mildly pleased over it, the pleasure mixed only too thoroughly with a feeling of impatience and the least trifle of boredom.

Six months ago, one month ago, even, being married to Lavinia was the thing he had wanted most of all. And here he was, married just three weeks and tired of matrimony and Lavinia already.

Tired? No, that wasn't it, either. It wasn't as definite as that. It was just a faint cloud of not being as rapturously, as unreally happy as he thought he would be, as he felt he ought to be, as he had been, the first day or two of marriage.

What a man he was! He didn't love

Lavinia and she had given up everything for him; her home, her parents, everything. Everything, that is, in a way.

They were going to live in New York when the honeymoon was over and of course then she could see her parents every day, and her friends, too, and have more money than she had had before marriage, and her own home. So she really wasn't exactly giving things up. But she thought she was—said so, anyhow. And she'd come way out here to California with him for a honeymoon—California had been Lavinia's idea—and here he was, a bit tired of things. Not of her, of course. And he'd never let her find out. Why, it would just break the heart of a sensitive, delicate little thing like Lavinia if she thought that he didn't love her any more. Lavinia had had a lot of chances to marry, dozens of them, she'd told him about them from the time he had first met her, and she had given up all of her other admirers for him. And now he wasn't even satisfied nor grateful.

They were in their suite at the Poinsetta and it was just before dinner. The suite consisted of a sunny living-room, done in ivory wicker and gay chintzes, quite in the fashion of the living-rooms of all suites of all "awfully nice" California hotels; a bed-room done in ivory enamel, with rose-coloured hangings, thereby differing from half of the bed-room which had draperies of blue, and, off that, a tiny white bath. Lavinia and Duane took their meals at the hotel, in the dining-room, or the garden or the grill, or at one of the fascinatingly odd restaurants within driving distance of the hotel, and spent their days driving or riding or

* "Her Honeymoon," by Solita Solano, appeared in the June number of THE SMART SET.

dancing or lounging, quite as all of the other hotel occupants did.

Duane had finished dressing for dinner, as much as he ever dressed for dinner in California—white flannels. He sat on the arm of the strongest-looking wicker chair and blew smoke out of the window. He had asked permission before starting in to smoke a cigarette. He hadn't found out until after he was married that Lavinia was awfully sensitive to cigarette smoke. She liked to take a couple of puffs of a cigarette, when it was lighted for her, after dinner or luncheon or tea. But, early in the morning, she simply couldn't understand Duane's smoking. And, if they'd been up late the night before, she couldn't bear the odour of smoke until afternoon.

Duane had wanted to get a suite or a bed-room of his own. He would really have preferred it. He was very sensitive about Lavinia waking up and finding him asleep with his mouth open or snoring. But Lavinia had never been alone in a hotel room before, it seemed, and it frightened her even to think of it. Oh, well, when they got back to New York and the apartment they had picked out, he could have his own room and smoke whenever he liked and let his clothes lie around on chairs, too, if he felt like it.

Lavinia was dressing. She had finished her bath and was putting on her underthings very slowly, popping out of the little bed-room after donning each additional garment. She'd run in with a little leap, and ask for a kiss or if Duane still loved her. She had run in, a minute before. She ran in, again, now. She wore an "envelope" of flesh-coloured Georgette crêpe. Duane thought the intimate names of the undergarments rather absurd, there were teddies and envelopes and buds and pierrettes. Over the "envelope" Lavinia had put on a pair of very pretty pink satin corsets, a bodice of laced pink ribbons, adorned with a tiny boutonniere of ribboned flowers in lavender and pink and another garment of flouncey Georgette, cream lace trimmed.

She wore open-work black silk stockings and pointed, black satin French-heeled slippers.

"Love me?" she asked again, taking a merry little dance step and jumping into his arms.

"Of course I do," answered Duane.

"How do I look?" She danced away, holding out the diminutive skirt of the just-added bit of lingerie.

"Quite stunning, quite fit for a Follies chorus," he told her.

"Oh, I thought I was heaps more alluring than that." She disappeared into the bed-room again.

"Of course you are," Duane called to her, "but if you don't hurry, we aren't ever going to get any dinner."

"Old bear-hungry," she answered, "doesn't even oo pitty wives in new underneaths make 'im fordit empty tummy?"

"Of course, of course," laughed Duane, as pleasantly as he could.

He was tired of lingerie, awfully tired of it. In the first place, he'd been seeing lingerie for years and years. Even the most virtuous of our young men can't escape it on the stage and in the shop windows. But Lavinia, ignoring even these two most evident sources, still thought it a daring, rather devilish treat for Duane. Her trousseau contained an assortment of lingerie in sets of fragile Georgette crêpe, in ivory white and lavender and flesh-colour. She told him, quite seriously, that blue was "awfully poor taste," but that flesh and white were always "good," and mauve and lavender rather "new."

The first days after their marriage had been spent on a tiresome overland train and Duane had had his first peep at Lavinia in lingerie. It had been pleasant, yet disappointing. He had seen her shoulders and arms, of course, in evening dress but he had pictured her a bit plumper. Lavinia was decidedly thin and a little too dark. Duane wondered, now, how he had ever happened to prefer a brunette. There is something so warm and fresh and pink and gold about blondes.

"What shall I wear, honey-bee?" called Lavinia.

Duane hesitated a second. He knew that the natural "it doesn't make any difference to me" would not do at all. He had tried it and found out.

"Let me see. What about the green dress? I like that," he said.

"The green dress?"

Lavinia came running in and perched on his knee, again.

She ran a finger through his hair and traced a line from the middle of his forehead to his chin. Then she kissed his forehead.

Duane wished that he might tell her that he didn't like to be fingered, that it was too warm for kissing. He didn't dare.

He sighed, ever so slightly, put an arm around her shoulder, kissed her lightly and muttered "you dear" as fervently as he could.

"The green dress?" repeated Lavinia and giggled, a little bubbly giggle that Duane had once thought so fascinating. "Aren't you the funniest boy! Don't you know that's a sport dress? Why, that's for walks with my honey-bee and out-of-door luncheons, day-time things, though it's turned out much too tight for golf or tennis. Wouldn't I look a fright, coming into the dining-room in that green dress?"

"But we are going to eat out of doors," protested Duane, holding out for his choice.

"I know, dear, but it's not an evening dress, you know. You *are* funny."

Lavinia mussed his hair slightly before running back into the bed-room. Duane hated having his hair mussed. But he had read in innumerable short stories that men liked it and he knew that women thought men liked it; nearly all the women he'd known had, anyhow. Oh, well!

He got up, went into the bed-room and combed his hair again. On the bed lay Lavinia's dress, fragile and white. She'd had it out, all the time, of course.

She now pointed to it triumphantly.

"See what I'm going to wear, so my

honey-bee can be proud of his little wives."

She changed, grew serious, alert.

"Here, I've got news for you and I've forgotten to tell you all this time. Guess who's here, right in this hotel and who is going to the Bishop's dance tonight, too, who I saw while you were reading the paper. Guess."

"Give it up," he said, but with interest. "Who is it?"

"Got to guess!"

"Not George De Rahm?" He rather hoped it was.

"That awful fellow. I should say not. Why, it's—it's Parker Hutchins!"

"Your old admirer. Well, really. Did you talk with him? How did he feel, finding you on your honeymoon?"

"He didn't say much, but then, when a girl turns you down for another fellow, you don't feel awfully pleased, I suppose. Still, of course we mustn't ever mention it to him. Aren't you awfully glad I chose you and not Parker for his horrid old money?"

"You can just bet I am."

Duane felt pleasantly important again. Parker Hutchins was a full five years older than he was and belonged to an older and a bit faster set. Hutchins had a lot of money. And yet Lavinia had actually refused to marry Parker Hutchins just because she didn't love him and had married him, Duane Blair, who didn't have nearly as much money, instead.

Lavinia had told him all about Parker and the real temptation he had been, some months before. Lavinia's people were not at all rich and her parents, it seemed, had encouraged her to marry Hutchins. But love had meant more than money to her, so she had taken Duane instead.

Duane kissed Lavinia with a trifle more warmth. She was a dear little thing and she loved him. He must be very good to her. Of course Parker Hutchins had wanted to marry her. You couldn't blame him, exactly, for his good taste. It hadn't seemed to Duane that Hutchins had "rushed" Lavinia so awfully much, but you can't tell about a

fellow like that. Certainly Lavinia had had flowers from him, she'd shown them to him herself, and Hutchins had taken her to the theater and to a number of small dances and she'd told Duane about teas and drives. Well, Hutchins knew which man she preferred now, at any rate.

Lavinia looked very well in the frothy white frock. Her hair was pretty, if it was dark, though Duane wished she wouldn't bunch it out quite so much at the sides. He'd hinted at that, but she had pouted and accused him of not knowing about styles. And she had on a little too much perfume. Lavinia used, seemingly, inexhaustible amounts of her favourite scent. Everything she wore was permeated with it, a kind of sandalwood, an odour which he did not care for. The whole small suite smelled of it continually. And yet Duane knew she used the perfume in order to make herself alluring to him. He couldn't be angry.

Later, perhaps, when he knew her better, he could speak to her about it.

II

THEY found a table under a big pepper tree in the hotel's garden restaurant. Then came the ordeal of ordering.

It hadn't been an ordeal to Duane before they were married. Then, Lavinia, had pretended a pretty indifference to food, had eaten very little, taking bits daintily on her fork, but had always been delighted with his choice of things, had been enthusiastically but delicately tempted.

Now, Lavinia wanted "something different, not just the same old things all the time." She ordered herself, now, usually choosing things she had never tasted or dishes with sauces prepared in a new way, many of which she didn't like after she tasted them. Her appetite, too, was much heartier. She credited this to "the wonderful California climate."

Duane knew he should have been delighted. He knew that she was too slender. Even her mother had hoped

the trip would benefit Lavinia and that she'd "plump out a bit." But, somehow, Duane didn't enjoy watching Lavinia eat. He knew it was unnatural of him. He had a good appetite. But, nevertheless, it was decidedly unpleasant to him to watch so much food disappear into her little pouty, rouged mouth. She still ate daintily enough, handling her knife and fork with rather annoying mannerisms. Her table tricks were not annoying when she had eaten only a little. Then they were cunning, interesting. It was only on occasions like last night, when she ate all of a poor little chicken, that they seemed unnecessary.

They ordered dinner.

"Some of those Catalina sand-dabs, with a lot of that nice 'goo' on them," Lavinia begged him, prettily.

Duane hated the word "goo." He ordered the sand-dabs, preceded by lobsters, though he knew that Lavinia would remark again, in apparent fresh amazement, on the fact that the California lobsters had no big claws. He ordered a number of vegetables of which he was quite fond and fresh figs with cream. It was too warm for soup and they had found out that vegetables are preferable to meats in California.

"I don't know what's the matter with me," said Lavinia, as she seemed to be picking daintily at a sand-dab, though in reality she was devouring all of it and its two neighbours, "I just eat and eat. Everything tastes so good in this California air. I'll be fat, as fat as that woman over there in blue. Look at that woman, Duane, you can look now, she isn't looking this way. Wouldn't you just hate to have me turn into a great big fat woman like that? Why do women let themselves go that way? I'd think she'd have more pride. You bet I'd never let myself go like that, even if I were fat."

The woman in blue was not especially fat, Duane thought. In fact, he thought her nicely rounded, pleasantly plump, rather jolly looking. But he had learned better than to argue with Lavinia about people's appearances. She was always

picking out people in a crowd, tearing them to pieces with evident relish and then pointing a moral, one that always reflected most pleasantly upon herself . . .

"Look, Duane, there's that Temple woman. No wonder her husband got a divorce. That's what she deserves and you know it. Why, her hat's enough to win a divorce. It's a woman's own fault if her husband divorces her, anyhow. You bet I'd know how to act so that no man could ever divorce me. I always say that if a woman . . ."

Or:

"I wonder if that woman doesn't know her dress is a fright. It isn't the money you spend on clothes. It's a sort of inborn knowledge, I guess. Now that dress cost an awful lot. For years I spent less than any girl in my crowd and yet I always had something appropriate to wear, every place I went. It's the things a woman picks out and the way she puts them on, not the money she spends . . ."

They got to the Bishops' at ten, after a pleasant walk in the hotel garden and then rather a rapid ride in a hired motor-car. The Bishops were New York friends who had a home in Southern California and spent four or five months there each year. They had an attractive place of faintly pink stucco, low and rambling, with a red-tiled roof, long arched porches and lovely gardens with fountains and a little, heart-shaped pool.

"It's just like fairyland, isn't it, Duane?" said Lavinia. This was her favourite way of describing the things she saw in California.

They danced on the porches, which ran around three sides of the house. Duane danced mostly with Lavinia. He had always enjoyed dancing with her. She was an excellent dancer.

"Must be getting pretty old," he thought, after one of the dances.

His mind had been more on the floor and the music and the people than on the little figure he held in his arms.

One of the guests at the Bishops' was Theresa Forrest, whom Duane hadn't

seen in three years. He had several dances with her. Theresa Forrest was a jolly girl. He'd known her for ages. Her parents and his parents had been everlastingly dragging them to the same summer and winter resorts when they were children.

He had almost forgotten how charming Theresa was. What a pleasant girl! Of course he had never been in love with her, not since they had been children, anyhow. But how wholesome she was, and frank and interesting! Her light brown hair was arranged rather smoothly and her evening gown was severe and straight. She was tanned, too, and the tan stopped abruptly in a square on her neck, leaving her shoulders unusually white.

He liked that sunburn. It meant a lot of pleasant days out of doors. What good times he and Theresa had had together! Of course Lavinia's skin was awfully tender. She had told him so. She couldn't possibly run around the way Theresa did. Theresa was husky, that was it. He had forgotten how much he liked huskiness.

"I think the new Mrs. Blair is lovely, Duane, I do, really," Theresa was saying. "She's so little and dainty and fragile, and sort of aloof. I feel terrifically awkward when I'm near her. And she is so pretty. But then, you've always had good taste in girls. Remember how you used to pick out the belles when you were a little fellow? Do you think she would like to motor over to Compton with us tomorrow, sort of an all-day picnic, not terribly exciting, but good food and splendid bathing if you care to go in."

"Sounds jolly," said Duane.

Somehow the thought of Theresa eating and being fond of food was quite all right. Theresa frankly gobbled when she was hungry, had conventionally good manners and all of that, but made no pretences of tasting and nibbling and mincing things. Theresa was wholesome. Why hadn't he married Theresa? They had been good pals, had had great times together. Theresa wouldn't have refused him. It didn't

seem fair to know, but Duane did know that Theresa wouldn't have refused him. He had been very fond of Theresa and yet it had never occurred to him to propose to her. He wondered, now, vaguely troubled, why he had never even thought of proposing to Theresa.

Duane and Theresa wandered out into the garden. The foliage of palms and pepper trees looked nearly black, the house had an almost pearl-like translucence. The couples, in light-colored costumes, strolling on the lawn, seemed unreal, as if they were about to turn into nymphs or dryads. He felt quite happy—and yet it was Theresa and not Lavinia who walked with him in the garden. He felt disloyal to Lavinia, though he knew that his actions were quite correct. It was his heart that was untrue.

They sat on a stone bench near a fountain. How still the night was in spite of the music and the chatter! How still Theresa was!

He remembered, now, how she had a way of sitting silent, not even moving her hands or her feet, and how much he had always liked that.

They spoke, then, about Theresa's winter, her mother was an invalid and still dragged her from one resort to another; about Duane's marriage, Theresa had read about it and had received an invitation, and about Duane's future.

"We'd better be getting in," said Theresa, "you know, young brides are jealous."

"Nonsense! She knows what good friends we've always been. I hope you and she will get along awfully well," Duane said heartily, and he meant it.

"I hope so," said Theresa. Then, as they neared the house,

"There's Mrs. McArthur. She is charming, isn't she? I've something I must tell her. Will you 'phone me tomorrow morning before ten if you care to go on the picnic?"

She ran up the steps and was lost among the dancers.

III

DUANE mounted the steps slowly, then stood leaning against a post, watching the couples who passed him. Parker Hutchins joined him.

There seemed to be an air of happiness about Hutchins, not at all what you would expect under the circumstances.

"How goes the honeymoon?" asked Hutchins pleasantly.

"One of the greatest little institutions in the world," Duane told him.

"Glad to hear that. Matter of fact, I'm rather wild over the idea. I'm—well, I'm seriously planning 'one of the same' myself."

"Good stuff. Congratulations and all that sort of thing. Who is the girl? Do I know her? Didn't know you—"

"Nothing new about it as far as I'm concerned. Margaret Duffield. You know her. Lovely little blonde girl. Fact is, I've been asking Margaret to marry me, on and off, since she was seven. But she insisted on going through college and even lengthened that by spending a couple of years abroad. Never would say yes to me. Not very complimentary, eh? But she gets her degree in June and then she's ready to take on a hubby. The merry wedding day isn't going to get here any too soon for me. Jolly little kid."

"Dandy girl. Double congratulations," observed Duane.

Hutchins went away to tell others his good news. Duane leaned a bit harder against the post.

Why, Lavinia had told him definitely, well, more or less definitely, that Hutchins had asked *her* to marry him. She'd even hinted at ways he had planned to persuade her, a bit of melodrama for good measure. She had given up the money Hutchins represented for *him*! But, of course, if Hutchins was in love with Margaret Duffield, he hadn't been in love with nor proposed to Lavinia.

Why, he'd seen Hutchins with the little Duffield girl, more or less all of his life, come to think of it. But the Duffield girl was always away at school

or in France and he'd never thought much about it. He remembered the Duffield girl, blonde and creamy and smooth-looking and pleasantly rounded. Yes, he could quite get Hutchins' view of her. Be even better looking as a matron, say ten years from now.

But Lavinia had told him . . . it came to Duane quite slowly that Hutchins had been picked out as an imaginary rival because he was supposed to be rather fast and rich and desirable. A rival—to stimulate his courtship! Hutchins hadn't cared at all for Lavinia! And Arthur Roberts or Stuart Morris—it was quite likely that those men, desirable bachelors and all that, hadn't cared either. They had taken Lavinia to dances occasionally, and she had hinted at teas and other things. So, they had had just the effect on him they were supposed to have had. Oh, well, he was married now.

Then Lavinia's voice broke in rather sharply on his contemplations.

"I've been looking everywhere for you. Everyone's been telling me that you've been with Miss Forrest and how often you've danced with her. It's a wonder you wouldn't pay just a little bit of attention to me. Duane, I'm not jealous or anything like that and I hope I never will be, but, well, on our honeymoon, it does rather hurt to see you carrying on, that's what it is, with an old sweetheart like that. Why, Theresa Forrest would have married you in a minute if she could and right now she'd do anything to—to win you away from me. You don't know how women are. You were out in the garden with her . . ."

Lavinia's voice quivered.

"Oh, come on, honey," said Duane as gently as he could. "You know Theresa doesn't mean anything to me. We're old friends. Let's walk down to that bench under the trees and talk it over. You haven't any reason to be jealous of her."

"Jealous? Of course I'm not jealous!" Lavinia broke in. "I'm taking it for granted you have better taste. You wouldn't suspect me of being jealous of

that great big fat person. That's perfectly ridiculous. I just don't want people laughing at you. I never saw anyone look like her in all my life. Imagine coming to a dance with a great square burned into your neck. Even if I were as big and fat as she is, I'd take some care of myself. But that's the trouble with those big masculine women, they just tramp around as if they were men, no wonder they never get married. But, Duane, you mustn't leave me alone like that. Most all of these people are strangers. I was—awfully lonely. I know you don't care anything about Theresa Forrest, do you? Tell me you don't."

"Of course I don't, dear," he said. "Of course I don't. If I had, wouldn't I have tried to marry her?"

Lavinia looked at him sharply, then laughed.

"Mustn't be bad to your honey-bee," she told him. "You know I'm little and kind of helpless and I'm used to being taken care of. I don't like my perfectly good husband to be making lots of eyes at old once-on-a-time sweethearts."

"Don't worry," he told her.

He didn't say anything about Hutchins. He'd pretend to be surprised when he heard of the engagement, even pretend to think it was because Lavinia had refused to marry him. Those things, when you're married . . .

"Want to go on a picnic tomorrow to Compton, with some friends of Theresa Forrest's?" he asked.

"Do you want to?"

"I want to do the things you want to do, dear."

"Well, to be truthful, I don't want to go. But I'll go if you care about it, just to show you I'm not jealous about that great big Theresa. But, honey-bee, I just hate picnics! I know what they'll do—sit around on the sand and run sand races and eat a lot of food at an old inn—I hate things like that. And my skin gets so horrid in the sun, it's awfully sensitive. If you want to go alone?"

"I should say not! We'll say no

more about it. I just thought it might be a diversion—"

"I don't like picnics or scurrying around. I like breakfast in my room and taking enough time to get dressed and having nice little walks with my honey-bee. We could have a horseback ride if it isn't too warm. I like my new habit, don't you? It's really an awfully good fit. Reynolds says it's a real treat to fit me, he can fit my coats without a wrinkle without even a fitting, if he wants to. He's really a wonder. The way he made my new sand-colored suit . . ."

They started back toward the house a few minutes later.

"I hate to leave this garden," said Lavinia. "Isn't it perfect? It's just like fairyland. Though I'd hate to have to go this far away from New York every year if it were my house. I'd like a place near New York, where you can have week-end parties all summer—"

IV

As they waited for their car, after telling all of their new and old friends good-bye with the heartiness California engenders and accepting Mrs. Bishop's invitation to dinner on Tuesday, a couple stood near them. Duane did not know either of them. The girl was smiling up into the man's face with an adoring look he had often seen on Lavinia's face when she looked up at him.

"See that girl," Lavinia whispered. "She's a dear—from Texas, named Rogers. They're staying at our hotel."

"That her husband?"

"Oh, no, but they are engaged, I think, or—well, I wouldn't be surprised if they would be soon. He's simply devoted to her, crazy over her. Her parents brought her here—she met him last year—and he came here especially to see her. Miss Rogers says he says he came on business—but you know. . . . His name's Miller, from Seattle, I believe, awfully rich . . . and crazy over her—"

Miller didn't look as if he were devoted. He was talking in a pleasant,

indifferent way. Then the girl spoke. Her voice was shriller, higher.

Duane caught the words:

"It'll be perfectly marvelous. I wouldn't go up with anyone but you, but you're so strong and skillful, so able to take care of me. Mr. Tredor asked me to go last week, but of course I wouldn't think of . . ."

In the car, Lavinia snuggled up close to Duane and asked, "Love me, dear? Much as ever?"

"Of course I do," answered Duane as heartily as he could. He put his arm around her.

That couple on the porch! Duane suddenly understood something, now, that he had never understood before. Lavinia's interpretation, "he's crazy over her, not engaged yet, but will be soon," the girl's high voice in patent flattery.

He knew, now, why he had married Lavinia and not Theresa nor any of the other girls he had known and liked. Theresa played square. He would have had to go all the way if he had wanted to get her. He had never thought of proposing to Theresa because she had never forced him to think of it. Lavinia, with her little cajoleries and suitors and flatteries! He couldn't have helped but think of proposing to Lavinia, once she had made up her mind.

Still, she was a nice little thing, a dear. How soft she was, and little! She'd never do anything to make him ashamed of her, too conventional for that. She'd always keep herself well-groomed—self-centered little women like that always do. And, in a way, he did love her. If she would use different perfume and get out of the habit of repeating her repertoire of old jokes and cute sayings quite so often and stop interrupting him every time he picked up a book—

But he could cure her of things like those, or get used to them, in time. She was a nice little thing. After all, she was rather helpless, the helpless sort. She couldn't help that. He'd take good care of her. He was a brute, finding out about Hutchins and being disloyal,

thinking of Theresa, the fourth week of his honeymoon. Years and years and years—of giggles and mannerisms and affectations—of petting and admiration and attention . . . still . . . it wasn't every man could get a nice little girl like Lavinia.

"What's the matter?" Lavinia whispered. "Him so silent. What him t'inking 'bout? Is him 'appy on him's 'oneymoon? Wan-ie, love me much as ever?"

"You bet. I am and I do," Duane answered and kissed her.



Freedom

By Leonard Hall

I AM very happy, now that I am free
 . And have cast off the fetters of her face,
 Her voice, her silent laughter, her lithe grace,
 And all the dreams that mazed and tangled me.
 I know that in the fever and the fret
 Of loving her so wholly, the high things
 To which my spirit ever burns and clings
 Were lost awhile. I have them now. And yet

There was the glory of a summer day,
 There was a quiet meadow, flower-starred,
 That sloped to meet a merry little stream.
 We said gay words, and kissed an hour away;
 Laughed, and were silent; found the parting hard;—
 Come, Deeds! What am I offered for a dream?



MINT—the place where they produce the models for the counterfeiting trade.



I F a woman is not passé by thirty-five, one wonders if she ever arrived.



T HE most pitiful sight is a jealous man's effort to smile.



Philosophy I

By Buckley McGurrin

I

LITTLE Jimmy Harwick had studied philosophy. Hence he considered himself a rather wise young man. Lolling in the garden's shade, where he awaited the advent of a certain young person named Peggy, he sought to Socratize the occasion.

"Consider that strutting peacock yonder," mused Jimmy, addressing himself, "How utterly useless it is! It has not a single accomplishment. It has no end in life save to strut in the sun and preen those glorious feathers—given it, I suppose, to compensate in part for its utter lack of intelligence. How vain it is, and how ridiculous, since that in which its vanity has rise—its plumage—is a purely biological dispensation!

What an insult to rationality is the aspect of such a parasite! It is an unjustifiable foible of civilization. It arouses my disgust, not to say my wrath. It is—"

At that moment the Peggy person tripped gaily out into the garden. Peggy knew as little as possible; she had carefully avoided most forms of thought, since thought may bring eyeglasses and wrinkles, and might very easily prove boresome. She wore an exquisite little *matinée* from Paris, which had cost her father several grunts.

Jimmy turned from his contemplation of the peacock to where Peggy smiled, preening herself in the sunlight.

And ten minutes later he proposed to her.



MARRIAGE is a device whereby the woman a man loves today insures herself against the woman he will love tomorrow.



IN order to get a reputation for reliability all one needs is a good memory for the lies one has already told.



FRANKNESS—the faculty of admitting that which you know is impossible to conceal.



Répétition Générale

By George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken

§ 1

ON NEW ENGLAND.—Perhaps the most that may be said of any American, culturally speaking, is that he is a realistic and praiseworthy imitation of a second-rate Englishman. There is, in the republic, nothing properly describable as a native fineness and urbanity; these things, when they are visible at all, are almost always borrowed, and usually from England. American society is simply third-rate English society; American politics is a sort of *reductio ad absurdum* of English politics; American scholarship is Oxford and well-water.

There was a time, true enough, when the American scholar showed a vast enthusiasm for German ideas, but that was a long while ago and the error has been forgotten. Moreover, the ideas thus filched were nearly always bad ones. As for French ideas, they have never got a lodgement in America. The American view of France is identical with the view of an English stockbroker. At the core of it there is nothing more intelligent than the notion that the hotels of Paris, though they lack bathrooms, serve very good meals and have humanely loose rules about what may go on in bedrooms. If the French ever take to Methodism and pass a Mann Act, all the statues to Lafayette in the United States will be torn down.

But though all Americans are thus tarred by the British brush, there is nevertheless a noticeable difference between the American of the South and the American of the North, for the former, in his formative days, modeled

himself upon the English country gentleman, whereas the model of the latter was obviously the worst type of English commercial bounder—the Alderman, the Lord Mayor, the eminent non-conformist, the advertising philanthropist, the right-thinker. One notes some touch of this element in nearly all New Englanders, for they are still arrant colonials and ape the English even in their speech. There is scarcely any such mammal, in the rigid Continental sense (or even in the higher English sense) as a New England gentleman. The best the typical Yankee can manage to achieve is an imitation of the outward forms of gentility; within you are very likely to find no more than the amusing complacency of the upstart, the empty pretensions of the shopman.

Picture to yourself two Yankees fighting a duel over a question of honour, or even discussing a question of honour at all! Two Virginians might do it, just as two English country gentlemen might (but never do) do it; but surely not two Vermonters or Massachusetts-istas. New England literature, even in its best days, was principally a cad literature. It was full of moral enthusiasm, but there was little if any beauty in it. The New Englander, indeed, like his model, the English soap manufacturer, has an instinctive distrust of the æsthetic; he fears that it will lead him into carnality, and so unfit him for the hard benches of the Puritan Paradise.

Consider, for example, New England poetry. Its distinguishing mark is its almost utter lack of that passionate gusto which differentiates poetry from prose. It is the product, one feels, not

of men drunk with the beauty of the world, but of prosody masters with mutton chops. The one genuine New England poet, William Cullen Bryant, was poisoned by Keats and Shelley in his teens and the result was "Thanatopsis," a very worthy poem. But Bryant, as everyone knows, escaped from New England at the first opportunity; the only air he could breathe was radiated by the flesh-pots of New York, then, as now, a stronghold of anti-Puritanism. Worse, he felt the lure of the Mediterranean, and after traveling in Spain took to translating the Greek poets. To a true New Englander Greek poetry can be nothing but syntax; the spirit behind it is quite as incomprehensible to him as French *esprit*. All he can see in the Greek, as in the Frenchman, is an immoral fellow, a loose liver, one to be complained of to the grand jury. I surely whisper no secret when I tell you that the only first-rate Grecian the United States has ever produced was born in South Carolina and has never taught north of the Mason and Dixon line.

Of the New England literature of today it is unnecessary to speak; no such thing exists. Even such prim and virtuous fellows as William Dean Howells and Henry James could not stand the atmosphere of the meeting house; they got out while they were yet young, and so saved at least a part of their intellectual hides. James, associating for years with the most decent sort of Englishmen, died with curses for American honour (*i.e.*, New England honour) on his lips. And when he said honour he meant the whole of culture; his soul revolted against the dreary sordidness of his native civilization. The best New England poetry of today (saving a few pieces by the Imagists and their imitators, frankly suspected by the elect) is of the sort one hears read by dull bores at flag-raising and university commemoration exercises — in brief, eighth-rate poetry of the occasion. Its chief exponents are Dr. George E. Woodberry and Dr. Percy Mackaye, neither of whom has written a single

beautiful verse. Most of Woodberry's alleged poetry, in truth, is simply sonorous pedantry; most of Mackaye's is like that composed by love-sick college boys. Yet both of these astounding poets are held in high veneration in Boston, and no meeting of the *intelligentsia* is complete without their presence.

Music? The whole fame of Boston as a capital of the tone art rests upon the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which was established, not by the people of Boston, but by one rich enthusiast, and has been in charge of foreigners from the start. The truth is that the orchestra has always lost money, and that even today it faces a musically ignorant audience. The New Englanders, indeed, seem to patronize it, not because they find anything enjoyable in good music, but precisely because they find something harsh and painful. Thus they escape the moral disgrace of yielding to the voluptuous. At all events, they turn their faces resolutely against every novelty; it is in New York, not in Boston, that the new things in music are done.

And setting aside the Boston Orchestra, there is little more musical activity in Boston than in Allentown, Pa. I offer a curious exhibit of the actual state of musical culture there. It is to be found in an educational treatise on the orchestra by Prof. Dr. Daniel Gregory Mason, an eminent Boston composer and critic. On one page he presents a picture of a man playing a violin. On another page he gravely presents a picture of a man playing a *second violin*! . . . Mason, you may be sure, knows his audience.

Nor is New England to the fore in scholarship; the New Englander was seldom, in any true sense, a learned man. The centre of his enlightenment, Harvard University, remained little more than a glorified high school until the Johns Hopkins and the other younger universities shook it up. The culture he radiated was largely made up of mere enthusiasm; he was as hot for donkeyish intellectual fads and isms as

a woman's club. His pretension to a sound education was almost entirely unsupported by anything properly describable as knowledge. Emerson, the flower of the flock, is a good example. He exists in history as the foremost New England philosopher of the Golden Age, and yet only a brief glance is sufficient to show that he knew little more about philosophy, in the technical sense, than a bright college boy. So elemental a book as Windelbrandt's (now familiar even to school teachers) would have taught him a lot. His search for the truth, far from leading him to it, or even toward it, actually led him into the sterile mazes of transcendentalism. He became the papa of the New Thought, the favourite metaphysician of Mother Eddy.

And since his day? Since his day the intellectual life in New England has moved steadily toward the estate and dignity of the intellectual life of Iowa. In the humanities Harvard has been adorned by precisely one man of the upper second rank, to wit, William James—and James was a New Yorker. Yale has had precisely one professor who could think, to wit, William Graham Sumner—and Sumner was born in New Jersey.

§ 2

The Ideal Woman (continued).—

1. She says "I'll call you on the telephone," not "I'll give you a ring".

2. She doesn't pretend that she is gaily tipsy after a single cocktail.

3. She is never what is called "effervescent".

4. When dining with a man, she is content to order something that appears on the menu, and doesn't elaborately instruct the headwaiter to fetch her, in place of the scheduled canteloupe Lillian Russell, a canteloupe flavoured with just a touch of orange juice and filled with half of a sliced banana, two small slices of pineapple, the rind of a clingstone peach, a pinch or two of plum, and a bit of whipped cream flavoured with marshchino.

5. When about to dine with a man for the first time, she doesn't eat three or four large ham and cheese sandwiches just before leaving home in order subsequently to impress him with her delicate appetite.

6. In the midst of a fox-trot, she doesn't ask her partner what he thinks of the League of Nations and what the Einstein theory is.

7. She never inquires whether it is really true that Mexican women smoke cigars nor, upon being answered in the affirmative, does she say "Ugh!"

8. When invited to have dinner in an Italian restaurant in West Houston Street, she doesn't show up in an evening gown.

9. When motoring through the country, she doesn't suddenly utter a cry, peremptorily stop the car, jump out and proceed to pick a large daisy growing by the roadside.

10. Upon drinking a glass of champagne, ginger ale or any other charged beverage, she doesn't observe that what she likes particularly about it is the way the bubbles tickle her nose.

11. At a dinner party she doesn't observe in an elaborately audible sotto voce to the man on her right that the man on her left is simply fascinating. Or vice versa.

12. Finding herself among a number of men at a rather free and easy party, she doesn't deem it necessary promptly to impress them with her virtue by entering into a long conversation about her mother.

13. She loves chocolate ice-cream soda, and admits it.

14. After eating a peppermint, she refrains from opening her mouth, taking a long inhalation, and observing how nice and cool her mouth feels.

15. She doesn't have her photograph taken in her bridal costume.

§ 3

The Home of the Brave.—Lately, at forty years, I got my first view of my own country—that is, of the real country behind the gaudy stage scenery of

the Atlantic seaboard. It was, of course, a mere cross section, as thin as the path of a carving-knife through a cheese, but nevertheless it was probably typical and fair enough. What images and sediments remain in the memory? Layer 1: a whole day of Iowa and Nebraska farms, each precisely like the other, and all intolerably bleak, lonesome and God-forsaken. Layer 2: a whole day of Wyoming and Utah deserts, each a vast magnification of the city dump at Union Hill, N. J. Layer 3: a day in the Sierrita Nevadas, first up from the violet chaos of the Great Salt Lake, and then down into the lush, Presbyterian exuberance of California, with its endless miles of orchards, its clapboard towns with their Elks' Halls, and its imperial succession of billboards whooping up Quigley's chewing-gum and Kelly Springfield tires.

Three days out from Chicago, the capital of American civilization—and in those three days I did not eat a single decent meal, or see a single pretty village, or get a glimpse of a single handsome gal. What I remember most vividly, indeed, is the incredible hideousness of the whole show. The American village, in that wide-rolling western country, outdoes even the ugliness that marks it so horribly in the East. It thrusts itself out of the void like a snagged tooth or a scream of pain. It is unlovely as a whole and thrice unlovely in detail. Such misshapen mountebanks of houses as it shows are indescribable and almost unimaginable. One is hauled up, every now and then, by combinations of lines and colours that positively approach the inconceivable. The eye aches for a sudden harmony, a charming chord of colour, a graceful roof line, a splash of the picturesque. There is absolutely no such thing between Omaha and Ogden.

One memory of true beauty I carried away. The trip across the Great Salt Lake causeway is genuinely charming. E. H. Harriman built that causeway—a man hated by every true heart between the Mississippi and the Coast. It runs across the shallow lake like a

pistol shot, and the train is at least an hour crossing it. The view to either side is always beautiful, and often superb—a vast reach of still, dark water, with low, purplish, mysterious-looking mountains in the distance. There is not a sign of human habitation. No village defaces the shores. I saw no boat on the waters. A few gulls sail lazily overhead. Beyond that the scene is perfectly static—a panorama of petrified beauty, lavish, outlandish and incomparable.

§ 4

An Audience's Imagination.—It is a stock saw that the greatest actor in the theater is the audience's imagination, and that the shrewd cultivation of that imagination is ever productive of rich financial returns. Nothing could be more ridiculous. The more a dramatist and producer rely on the imagination of an audience, the less the box-office reward that is theirs. An audience fills a theater not so eager to perform with its imagination as to have its imagination performed upon. There is no effort at paradox in this last. The difference is the difference between a rank commercial failure like Molnar's "Where Ignorance Is Bliss" which asks an audience to perform with its imagination and a great commercial success like Barrie's "Peter Pan" which performs upon the audience's imagination by supplying to it every detail of imagination, ready-made and persuasively labelled.

§ 5

Tiger! Tiger!—Dr. John Grier Hibben, president of Princeton University, recently observed in the course of an address that unless women go back to the old-fashioned manner of dress, and so regain their modesty, men will lose all respect for them and all sense of the old essential chivalry. Here, again, we note the usual sophomoric nonsense predicated upon the assumption that man's respect for woman and sense of chivalry toward her are mere corollaries

of her aspect as a female. This is the smirker philosophy raising its eyes piously to heaven. What self-respecting woman wants this kind of respect, or chivalry from the kind of man who holds it?

§ 6

American Music.—American music is down with diabetes, not because the typical American musician is an ignoramus, but precisely because he is a professor. That is to say, he is the exact opposite of a Schubert: he is so well barbered, professionally, that he is unable to move his arms and legs. Turn, for example, to the orchestral writing of any of our chief native composers, say, Hadley or Converse. One finds in it a perfect mine of what may be called musical learning—a competent employment of all the traditional devices, a sound technique, a careful avoidance of bad grammar, even a touch of style. But one finds in it nothing else—no genuinely musical ideas, no contagious force and gusto, not a hint of that homely delight which is at the bottom of all first-rate music, new or old, whether it be a Bach fugue or a German folk-song, an Italian aria or a Russian trepak.

In other words, one finds it cold, brittle, artificial. The composer is not letting himself go in it; he is not writing because unquenchable tunes are bubbling up in him; he is writing to demonstrate what a learned fellow he is. Above all, he is trying to show how far he stands above the vulgar jingling of his nation and time—how remote he is from the vulgarities that tickle the ears of his countrymen. The result is foreordained. In getting away from vulgarity he also gets away from music, and what he produces is no more than a creditable conservatory exercise, as depressing as a dead fish. Such stuff may sometimes please the eye—it may be a good example of what the Germans call *Augenmusik*—but it can no more reach the pulses than a theorem in Euclid, for no pulse was throbbing when it was hatched.

And why? Simply because these

composers have been so relentlessly educated in music that they can no longer hear. In the vast body of genuine native music that wells and rages around them—music as characteristic of the nation as baseball or graft—they can discern only a vulgar disorder. Its incalculable riches, not only in suggestions but even in actual materials, elude them. They try to create an American music, not out of these lavish and delightful materials, but out of débris from the boneyards of Debussy, Strauss and Brahms. That is to say, they try to decorate and refine the edifice before they have put in its foundations—they seek to polish what yet remains to be roughed out.

Only the negro composers, it seems to me, avoid this capital error, and only the negro composers are doing any writing that is distinctive and original. Most of them are deficient in technique, and a few of them are almost uneducated, but they at least have ears, they at least hear the music of their country, they at least try to write as Americans, and not as imitation Germans or Frenchmen. One always feels, in listening to their songs, that their ideas came to them out of their surroundings and their inner consciousness, not out of midnight study of César Franck, or Schoenberg, or Erik Satie, or Richard Strauss. They know less than they might know, perhaps, about the sonata form and the chords of the second, but the national sunlight is in their souls. Their significance lies, not so much in their slender accomplishment, as in their service as pathfinders; they show the true way to a native music. What they are at is precisely what Cui, Borodin, Moussorgsky and company achieved in Russia. These fellows saved Russian music from imitativeness and made it Russian. Under Tchaikowsky it was becoming merely second-rate German music—Pilsner diluted with Volga water. Cui and his friends threw that influence overboard, and went back to Glinka and the folk-song, as our harmonic Moors go back to the Jubilee Songs and Stephen Foster. The result

is that Russian music now stands firmly on its own four legs. It is not second-rate German music, or third-rate Italian music, or fourth-rate French music; it is first-rate Russian music, and the world listens to it.

In the other arts in America the same following after flaccid foreign gods does like damage. The typical American artist, whether in literature, in daubing, in clay-squeezing or in architecture, is a self-conscious fop, bent only upon showing his detachment from the herd. In Greenwich Village, he actually tries to detach himself from the herd physically, and to set up a brummagem Latin Quarter within ten minutes' walk of Tammany Hall. The only result is an epidemic of precosity—empty, idle and obnoxious. It is a sound instinct which makes the Philistine laugh boorishly at such frauds, for the Philistine, after all, is quite as much a genuine artist as they are. Deficient in ideas and unable to react normally to their environment—the store-house of ideas for all true artists—they seek to convert their incapacity into a form of superiority, and bawl against the neglect which pursues them. It is the neglect, exactly, which pursues a vacuum. They get nowhere for the plain reason that their goods are valueless.

It is a part of my job in the world to read the manuscripts of neglected geniuses on the literary side, and I get a great many every week from the various Alsacias of the order, particularly Greenwich Village. What I find in them is what one finds in American music—technique, piffle, artificiality—the creaking movement of wax dummies—laborious self-portraits—the hollow agonies of studio, tea-shop and magazine ante-room. Not a touch of the prodigious gusto and gaudiness of American life. Not an echo of that gargantuan turmoil, that stupendous striving, that whooping gallantry and hoggishness, that titanic melodrama. Not a hint that, amid all the horde of bombastic paper-spoilers, there is a single eye that can see what is directly before his adjacent nose.

Literature is not made in that way. Literature may have its cunning and its craft, but it must also have its innocence—it must be, in a way, an artless expression of genuine feeling. The cunning and the craft may come later, or not at all; they may be dispensed with if the rest is there. The man who stands out from the field of American letters like the Alps from the Piedmont plain had little of either; he died envying the technique of Howells. And yet there was in the work of Mark Twain a gigantic and irresistible force, for he was wholly of his time and his country, and he gave its ideas articulation, and he reproduced its life with fidelity and power.

Mark knew nothing of the literary subtleties which engage the dunderheads of Greenwich Village and the old maids who write books. Most of them, I dare say, he had not even heard of. He had no professional sense. He disliked literary theories and discussions. But he had ears to hear and eyes to see, and what he heard and saw he projected simply and vividly—a picture that disarmed all cavil by its sheer truth and brilliance, its bald power of enforcing recognition. That, says Joseph Conrad, is all that a creative artist can hope to accomplish, whatever the fineness of his means—"and it is everything."

§ 7

The Yokel Soul.—What yokel souls, after all, the most of us have! Take me, for example. I have traveled and lived the world over since boyhood, and what of all the great grandeur and beauty of foreign lands lingers most persistently (and honestly) in my mind? That the shoe-shines in the Hotel Adlon in Berlin are the glossiest I have ever seen; that a sharp pebble got into my shoe while I was looking at the Sphinx and cut my foot; that I lost my hat in Shanghai and couldn't get another to fit me; that I fell off a tally-ho on the road to Hampton Court and bruised my knee; that I kissed a French girl in the

tunnel near Paris on the way from Calais and got my face slapped; that I was arrested in Florence for trying to steal a small tombstone from a graveyard; that I once discovered an excellent glass of Culmbacher in Constantinople; that the worst stomach-ache I ever had was during a stay in the Engadine; that while skating in St. Petersburg I once bumped into a fat woman, upset her, and caused her to fracture two ribs; that the best soup I ever tasted was that I got in Stockholm; that I met a native girl in Tokio who took me for a Japanese; that the worst Scotch whiskey I ever drank was some I got in Edinburgh; that I once had my hair cut in Buda-Pest and looked like a freak for a month afterward; that on the wall of my hotel room in Johannesburg there hung a picture of Della Fox; that I had a devil of a time getting a tooth pulled in Tunis . . .

§ 8

The Ideal Man.—Comes a fair one, the Mlle. Angèle Carrère, in rebuttal. "The Ideal Woman"? she sniffs. What about the choicest male? Follows her ballot:

1. He is able to pick up a newspaper without promptly turning to the sporting page, the market reports, or imagining he could write better editorials.

2. He never orders clams for timid girls.

3. He has occasionally met a woman who was not like other women.

4. He is able to take a girl in his canoe without relating the perilous trip he once made in the Canadian wilds.

5. He never calls his valet his "man."

6. Signet rings give him nausea.

7. He knows nothing whatever about Kipling.

8. He never tells you how few intelligent people there are.

9. He abhors goulash.

10. He does not consider himself the original cynic and allows you to share your own half of the monopoly on cynicism.

11. He never refers to his former amours in a philosophical manner.

12. When trifling over the telephone he never tries to give the booth any other geographical location than it actually has.

13. He can take a drink without betting you that you can't name a cocktail that he has not drunk and telling you item by item what the wine-cellars of his friends contain.

14. He never makes use of such phrases as "My dear girl."

15. He signs his name so that it may be read without brain-strain.

16. He is an epicure of mutual conviviality. Conscious that a woman likes him, he does not pretend to ignore her.

17. He does not think he looks like a real devil in a uniform.

18. Entertaining ladies in his apartment, he does not inflate himself with the idea that he makes the best salad dressings on the continent.

19. He is able to pass two women engaged in conversation without believing that they immediately make him the topic.

20. When in a theater he does not imagine the woman next him is conscious only of his presence.

21. He is able to walk through a slum district without telling you that there is not a single good Italian restaurant in the neighbourhood that he does not know.

22. He is able to put on his hat without telling about the time the President of the Hudson Trust Co. left his in its place and how shabby the hat left by the banker was.

23. He has the good sense not to ask a girl for the third dance when she has refused the second.

24. He does not quote German pessimists, considering their vogue past.

25. He never makes a bore of himself by telling what things bore him.

26. When taking a girl home at night he does not amuse himself by imagining that her sole thoughts are on a culminating caress.

27. He considers it bad taste to say that he wishes he really could love someone, but that he is too fickle and critical. He knows that that doesn't fetch 'em.

28. He never boasts of his ability to single out a defective.

29. When attempting to make the acquaintance of a strange and pretty girl by the unconventional method, he never asks her if the bus stops on the near or the far side.

30. He never observes that he has always had enough for his "modest wants."

§ 9

The Pedagogue.—Consider the job of the poor schoolmaster: he is one employed at starvation wages to force the great bubbles and balloons of knowledge into cranial spaces that would not admit a hair. Is it any wonder that his reason gradually decays? Is it a marvel that he becomes sour, crabbed and preposterous? Is it excuse for lifting eyebrows that he seeks refuge from an intrinsic impossibility in a Chinese maze of empty technique?

The ghost of Pestalozzi, once bearing a torch, now leads down dark and twisted stairways into damp and abhorrent tombs. Especially in These States, where all that is bombastic and mystical is most esteemed, the art of pedagogy becomes a sort of benign hocus-pocus, a fabric of childish secrets, a grotesque compound of false premises and illogical conclusions. Every year sees a craze for some new solution of the teaching enigma, at once simple and infallible—manual training, playground work, song and doggerel lessons, the Montessori method, the Gary system—an endless series of flamboyant arcanaums. The worst extravagances of *Privat Dozent* experimental psychology are gravely seized upon; the uplift pours in its ineffable principles and discoveries; mathematical formulæ are worked out for every emergency; there is no sure-cure so idiotic that some superintendent of schools will not swallow it.

A couple of days spent examining the literature of this New Thought in pedagogy are enough to make the judicious break down and sob. Its aim seems to be to reduce the whole teach-

ing process to a sort of automatic reaction, to discover some master formula that will not only take the place of competence and resourcefulness in the teacher, but that will also create an artificial receptivity in the child. The merciless application of this formula (which changes every year) now seems to be the chief end and aim of pedagogy. Teaching becomes a thing in itself, separable from and superior to the thing taught. Its mastery is a special business, a transcendental art and mystery, to be acquired in the laboratory. A teacher well grounded in this mystery, and hence privy to every detail of the new technique (which changes, of course, with the formula), can teach anything to any child, just as a sound dentist can pull any tooth out of any jaw.

All this, I need not point out, is in sharp contrast to the old theory of teaching. By that theory mere technique was simplified and subordinated. All that it demanded of the teacher told off to teach, say, geography, was that he master the facts in the geography book and provide himself with a stout rattan. Thus equipped, he was ready for a test of his natural genius. First he exposed the facts in the book, then he gilded them with whatever appearance of interest and importance he could conjure up, and then he measured the extent of their transference to the minds of his pupils. Those pupils that had ingested them got apples; those that had failed got the rattan. Followed the second round, and the same test again, with a second noting of results. And then the third, and the fourth, and the fifth, and so on until the last and least pupil had been stuffed to his subnormal and perhaps moronic brim.

I was myself grounded in the underlying delusions of what is called knowledge by this austere process, and despite the eloquence of those who support newer ideas, I lean heavily in favour of it, and weep to hear that it is no more. It was crude, it was rough, and it was often not a little cruel, but it at least had two capital advantages over all

the systems that have succeeded it. In the first place, its machinery was simple; even the stupidest child could understand it; it hooked up cause and effect with the utmost clarity. And in the second place, it tested the teacher as and how he ought to be tested—that is, for his actual capacity to teach, not for his mere technical virtuosity. There was, in fact, no technique for him to master and hence none for him to hide behind. He could not conceal a hopeless inability to impart knowledge beneath a correct professional method.

That ability to impart knowledge, it seems to me, has very little to do with technical method. It may operate at full function without any technical method at all, and contrariwise, the most elaborate of technical methods, whether out of Switzerland, out of Italy or out of Gary, Ind., cannot make it operate when it is not actually present. And what does it consist of? It consists, in the first place, of a natural talent for dealing with children, for getting into their minds, for putting things in a way that they can comprehend. And it consists, in the second place, of a deep belief in the interest and importance of the thing taught, of a concern about it amounting to a sort of passion.

A man who knows a subject thoroughly, a man so soaked in it that he eats it, sleeps it and dreams it—this man can always teach it with success, no matter how little he knows of technical pedagogy. That is because there is enthusiasm in him, and because enthusiasm is almost as contagious as fear or the barber's itch. An enthusiast is willing to go to any trouble to impart the glad news bubbling within him. He thinks that it is important and valuable to know; given the slightest glow of interest in a pupil to start with, he will fan that glow to a flame. No hollow formalism cripples him and slows him down. He drags his best pupils along as fast as they can go, and he is so full of the thing that he never tires of expounding its elements to the dullest.

This passion, so unordered and yet so potent, explains the capacity for teach-

ing that one frequently observes in scientific men of high attainments in their specialties—for example, Huxley, Ostwald, Metchnikoff, Haeckel, Harnack, Halsted and Osler—men who knew nothing whatever about the so-called science of pedagogy, and would have derided its alleged principles if they had heard them stated. It explains, too, the failure of the general run of college professors and high-school teachers—men who are undoubtedly competent, by the professional standards of pedagogy, but who nevertheless contrive only to make intolerable bores of the things they presume to teach. No intelligent student ever learns much from the average drover of undergraduates; what he actually carries away has come out of his text-books, or is the fruit of his own reading and inquiry. But when he passes to the graduate school, and comes among men who really understand the subjects they teach, and, what is more, who really love them, his store of knowledge increases rapidly, and in a very short while, if he has any intelligence at all, he learns to think in terms of the thing he is studying.

So far, so good. But an objection still remains, the which may be couched in the following terms: that in the average college or high school, and especially in the elementary school, most of the subjects taught are so bald and uninspiring that it is difficult to imagine them arousing the passion I have been describing—in brief, that only an ass could be enthusiastic about them. In witness, think of grammar, penmanship, arithmetic, or spelling.

This objection, at first blush, seems salient and dismaying, but only a brief inspection is needed to show that it is really of very small validity. It is made up of a false assumption and a false inference. The false inference is that there is any sound reason for prohibiting teaching by asses, if only the asses know how to do it, and do it well. The false assumption is that there are no asses in our schools and colleges today. The facts stand in almost complete antithesis to these notions. The

truth is that the average schoolmaster, on the lower levels, is and always must be essentially an ass, for how can one imagine an intelligent man engaging in so puerile an avocation? And the truth is that it is precisely his inherent asininity, and not his technical equipment as a pedagogue, that is responsible for whatever modest success he now shows.

I here attempt no heavy jocosity, but mean exactly what I say. Consider, for example, penmanship. A decent handwriting, it must be obvious, is useful to all men, and particularly to the lower orders of men. It is one of the few things capable of acquirement in school that actually help them to make a living. How is it taught today? It is taught, in the main, by schoolmarms so enmeshed in a complex and unintelligible technique that, even supposing them to be able to write clearly themselves, they find it quite impossible to teach their pupils. Every few years sees a radical overhauling of the whole business. First the vertical hand is to make it easy; then certain curves are the favourite magic; then there is a return to slants and shadings. No department of pedagogy sees a more hideous cackling of quacks. In none is the natural talent and enthusiasm of the teacher more depressingly crippled. And the result? The result is that our school children write abominably—that a clerk or stenographer with a simple, legible “hand” becomes almost as scarce as one with Greek.

Go back, now, to the old days. Penmanship was then taught, not mechanically and ineffectively, by unsound and shifting formulae, but by passionate penmen with curly, patent-leather hair and faraway eyes—in brief, by the unforgettable professors of our youth, with their flourishes, their heavy downstrokes and their lovely birds-with-letters-in-their-bills. You remember them, of course. Asses all! Preposterous popinjays and numskulls! Pathetic idiots! But they loved penmanship, they believed in the beauty and glory of penmanship, they were fanatics, devotees, almost martyrs of penmanship—and so

they got some touch of that passion into their pupils. Not enough, perhaps, to make more flourishes and bird-blazons, but enough to make sound penmen. Look at your old writing book; observe the excellent legibility, the clear strokes of your “Time is money.” Then look at your child’s.

Such idiots, despite the rise of “scientific” pedagogy, have not died out in the world. I believe that our schools are full of them, both in pantaloons and in skirts. There are fanatics who love and venerate spelling as a tom-cat loves and venerates catnip. There are *grammatomaniacs*; schoolmarms who would rather parse than eat; specialists in an objective case that doesn’t exist in English; strange beings, otherwise sane and even intelligent and comely, who suffer under a split infinitive as you or I would suffer under gastro-enteritis. There are geography cranks, able to bound Mesopotamia and Beluchistan. There are zealots for long division, experts in the multiplication table, lunatic worshippers of the binomial theorem. But the system has them in its grip. It combats their natural enthusiasm diligently and mercilessly. It tries to convert them into mere technicians, clumsy machines. It orders them to teach, not by the process of emotional osmosis which worked so beautifully in the days gone by, but by formulae that are as baffling to the pupil as they are paralyzing to the teacher. Imagine what would happen to one of them who stepped to the blackboard, seized a piece of chalk, and engrossed a bird that held the class spell-bound—a bird with a thousand flowing feathers, wings bursting with parabolas and epicycloids, and long ribbons streaming from its bill! Imagine the fate of one who began “Honesty is the best policy” with an H as florid and—to the jejune—as lovely as the initial of a mediæval French manuscript! Such a teacher would be cashiered and handed over to the secular arm; the very enchantment of the assembled infantry would be held as damning proof against him. And yet it is just such teachers that we should try to discover and de-

velop. Pedagogy needs their enthusiasm; their innocent belief in their own grotesque talents; their capacity for communicating their childish passion to the childish.

This, of course, would mean exposing the children to contact with monomaniacs, half-wits, defectives! But what of it? The vast majority of them are already exposed to contact with half-wits in their own homes; they are taught the word of God by half-wits on Sundays; they will grow up into Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, 100% Americans, and other such half-wits in the days to come. Moreover, as I have hinted, they are already face to face with half-wits in the actual schools, at least in three cases out of four. The problem before us is not to dispose of this fact, but to utilize it. We cannot hope to fill the schools with persons of high intelligence, for persons of high intelligence simply refuse to spend their lives teaching such banal things as spelling and arithmetic. Among the teachers male we may safely assume that 95 per cent. are of low mentality, else they would depart for more appetizing pastures. And even among the teachers female the best are inevitably weeded out by marriage, and only the worst (with a few romantic exceptions) survive.

Thus, the task before us is not to make a vain denial of the cerebral inferiority of the pedagogue, nor to try to combat and disguise it by concocting a mass of technical hocus-pocus, but to search out and put to use the value lying concealed in it. For even stupidity, it must be plain, has its uses in the world, and some of them are uses that intelligence cannot meet. One would not tell off a Galileo or a Pasteur to drive an ash-cart, nor an Ignatius Loyola to be a stockbroker, nor a Brahms to be a church organist. By the same token, one would not ask a Herbert Spencer or a Duns Scotus to instruct sucklings. Such men would not only be wasted at the job; they would also be incompetent. The business of dealing with children demands something that such men lack, to wit, a certain childishness

of mind. The best teacher, until one comes to adult pupils, is not the one who knows most, but the one who is most capable of reducing knowledge to that simple compound of the obvious and the wonderful which slips easiest into the infantile comprehension. A man of high intelligence, perhaps, may accomplish the thing by a conscious intellectual feat. But it is vastly easier to the man (or woman) whose habits of mind are naturally on the plane of a child's. The best teacher of children, in brief, is one who is essentially child-like.

I go so far with this notion that I view the movement to introduce female bachelors of arts into the primary schools with the utmost alarm. A knowledge of Bergsonism, the Greek aorist, sex hygiene and the dramas of Percy Mackaye is no help to the teaching of spelling. On the contrary, it corrupts and blows up that naïf belief in the glory and portentousness of spelling which is at the bottom of all successful teaching of it. If I had my way, indeed, I should expose all candidates for berths in the infant grades to the Binet-Simon test, and reject all those who reveal the mentality of more than fifteen years. Plenty would still pass. Moreover, they would be secure against contamination by the new technique of pedagogy. Its vast wave of pseudo-psychological rumble-bumble would curl and break against the hard barrier of their innocent and passionate intellects—as it probably does, in fact, even now. They would know nothing of cognition, perception, attention, the sub-conscious and all the other half-fabulous fowl of the pedagogic aviary. But they would see in reading, writing and arithmetic the gaudy charms of important and esoteric knowledge, and they would teach these ancient branches, now so abominably in decay, with passionate gusto, and irresistible effectiveness, and a gigantic success.

§ 10

Further Addenda to "The American Credo."—Contributed by the Messrs.

Frederick Muller, E. Byron, Morton Hoyt, David Lloyd George, Owen Hatteras, et al:

1. That the mutual confidences of boarding-school girls are very racy.

2. That Ruth Law was in reality a German boy shrewdly disguised.

3. That the liquid contained in the centre of many golf balls will cause instant total blindness.

4. That when one asks a bell-boy in a hotel in Buda-Pest to get one's suit pressed, he reappears in a few minutes with a large blonde.

5. That the description of the Battle of the Marne in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" is a wonderful piece of writing.

6. That if one's nose itches, it is a sign that someone is coming to visit.

7. That if one spills salt, one should throw a pinch over one's left shoulder to ward off ill luck.

8. That when someone walks between a couple, each of them should say "bread and butter" to ward off a quarrel.

9. That when one sees a red-headed woman, one is sure to see a white horse within a block.

10. That it is bad luck to see the new moon over one's left shoulder.

11. That carrying a buckeye in one's pocket will prevent rheumatism.

12. That a piece of bread and butter, if dropped, will always fall butter side down.

13. That to drop a dish rag signifies that company is coming.

14. That rapping on wood will ward off calamity.

15. That if one's corns hurt, it is a sign that it is going to rain.

16. That if one dreams of falling and dreams that one lands, one will never awaken and will be dead.

17. That if one saves the pennies, the dollars will save themselves.

18. That to have a black cat cross your path means bad luck.

19. That thunder sours fresh milk.

20. That cockroaches born in the morning are great grandfathers before evening.

21. That when a man consults his

watch he always forgets what time it is one instant after he has replaced it in his pocket.

22. That women search their husbands' pants pockets at night and appropriate all the loose change.

23. That there are a vast number of desperate underworld characters who will engage to murder anybody for a sum not exceeding one dollar and fifty cents.

24. That French ladies' maids during their idle moments amuse themselves by peeping through the key-holes of bedroom doors.

25. That when one of the ultra-fashionable set gives a house-party the guests do nothing but lounge around, drink cocktails, and engage in a great deal of very witty repartee.

26. That before the war whenever the American ambassador in Berlin attended a diplomatic function he would be insulted by German high officials who would crack jokes about the United States.

27. That one can greatly increase one's chest expansion by standing in front of an open window every morning and taking twenty-five deep breaths.

28. That at every fashionable wedding there are present no less than a dozen detectives who are engaged to watch the valuable gifts, and that nobody can ever distinguish the detectives from the guests.

29. That people suffering from tuberculosis are always very optimistic and feel sure that there is nothing the matter with them.

30. That when one swallows a needle it travels through the body for years and years and ultimately emerges somewhere in the region of the little toe.

31. That all policemen have unduly large feet.

32. That people who live far away from New York know far more about the town than the natives do.

33. That old ladies enjoy attending a funeral and that they always obtain front-row seats.

34. That when a man on the street gazes at a woman wearing abbreviated

skirts his emotions are greatly aroused, but that if he were to see the same woman in a bathing suit the sight of her would leave him cold.

35. That if one is having bad luck in a card game a great change of fortune is effected by walking around one's chair.

36. That if a young swain can watch his girl eat corn on the cob and still have any love for her, his affection is genuine.

37. That the cooks who prepare grid-dle cakes in the front windows of Childs' restaurants are all expert jugglers.

38. That a man who lives to be a hundred years old always takes one glass of whiskey a day and uses tobacco freely and that if he did not do so he would live to the same age anyway.

39. That it is extremely hazardous to drink well-water in the dark since one is likely to swallow a pollywog.

40. That if China could organize an army in proportion to its population it could conquer the world in about three weeks.

41. That when an old maid retires at night she always looks under the bed for a burglar, and that if she were to discover one she would immediately lock the door and throw the key out of the window.

42. That when a Frenchman gets in a free-for-all fight he always strikes out with his feet instead of his fists.

43. That if a demi-rep really falls in love with a man she is always faithful to him to the bitter end.

44. That the director of an orchestra makes a great many gestures merely to show off and that the music would be almost as good if there were no leader at all.

45. That when a small boy is having his photograph taken he will remain very quiet if one tells him that a little bird is about to emerge from the camera.

46. That people of Oriental blood always have very wily natures and that they glide about without making a sound.

47. That when a military spy is caught he always has in his possession

a small but extremely valuable piece of paper which he immediately proceeds to chew up and swallow.

48. That when people who are unaccustomed to money inherit a fortune their existence is likely to become very miserable.

49. That the headwaiter in every fashionable restaurant owns a block of apartments and a Rolls-Royce.

50. That when a Yale football team trots out on the field their opponents become frightened to death at the mere sight of their uniforms.

51. That no matter how angry a woman may be at her husband he can always appease her wrath by giving her enough money to buy a new hat.

52. That during the late war a great many society girls who acted as nurses cut up high jinks with the young soldiers.

53. That middle-aged widows are very fond of college boys.

54. That before long all the money in the country will be in the hands of the Jews.

55. That if the man in the end seat of a trolley car yawns, everyone else in the car will soon also be yawning.

56. That a person's sensations while drowning are rather agreeable and that on the whole it is a very pleasant death.

57. That cows have very sad eyes.

58. That raspberries taste better when eaten off the bush.

59. That acrobats could not do their stunts if they had not had their bones scientifically broken a few moments after they were born.

60. That when two women enter a street car they always have a loud argument as to which one will stand the fare, but that as a matter of fact they are both bluffing and neither one wants to pay.

61. That Chinese labourers work sixteen hours a day and are paid a weekly stipend of approximately eleven cents.

62. That football is a very fine thing and greatly improves the moral character of college boys and that they never neglect an opportunity in the heat of a game to surreptitiously kick an opponent in the back of the head.

63. That the men who pass the collection plates in Fifth Avenue churches always have a lot of loose change in their pockets on Monday morning.

64. That the nurses in maternity hospitals are often careless and that the babies frequently get mixed up.

65. That no matter how severe a toothache one may have, it always disappears while one is on the way to the dentist.

66. That many women who live in fashionable apartment houses have liaisons with the elevator boys.

67. That a young man who holds a position of trust in the financial world is constantly shadowed by detectives and that if he were to dine with a chorus girl he would immediately lose his job.

68. That most women begin a street flirtation by dropping their handkerchiefs.

69. That a German never spends less than one hour consuming a single glass of beer.

70. That women of the half world always carry all their money in their stockings.

71. That the liquor problem is entirely due to corner saloons and that if there had never been such places nobody would have ever got drunk.

72. That a flea is a very intelligent insect.

73. That all the chorus girls in the Hippodrome are over forty years of age and have false teeth.

74. That in a photoplay a motion picture actress brings tears to her eyes by concealing an onion in her handkerchief.

75. That it is very dangerous to sleep in a folding bed since it is liable to close up in the middle of the night and smother one to death.

76. That the Indians in wild west shows are in reality not Indians at all but painted Chinamen.

77. That a man who is sitting in front of one will turn around if one concentrates one's attention on the back of his head.

78. That a dexterous pickpocket can actually extract a roll of bills from the

inside of one's undershirt without one being the wiser.

79. That American men have more respect for women than the men of any other country.

80. That women who loll about the beaches in stunning bathing costumes never go near the water.

81. That whenever a bank fails the president is always a venerable gray-haired man who either commits suicide or goes to jail.

82. That French actresses never hesitate to appear on the stage perfectly nude.

83. That when a man falls from a great height he always loses consciousness before he hits the ground.

84. That people who sit in the gallery at a play are more discriminating than those in the orchestra.

85. That most men, when dressed in evening clothes, can hardly be distinguished from waiters.

86. That people with red hair are more directly descended from monkeys than the rest of mankind.

87. That when Italians make wine they always press the grapes with their bare feet.

§ 11

Me Und Shakespeare.—One of the most diverting spectacles concerned with the motion pictures is the effort made by writers who sell themselves to the films to retain a measure of their self-respect by writing pieces for the papers arguing that the movies are a high and noble art, and that if Shakespeare were alive today he would assuredly turn from his "Macbeths" and "Hamlets" to the composition of "For Husbands Only," "The Velvet Claw," "The Siren's Soul," "The Virgin of Stamboul," and similar screen masterpieces. These gentlemen, each of whom is in his statements as positive as a Montmartre Wassermann, are evidently in the close occult confidence not only of the Bard, but of all the lights of classic literature. M. Rupert Hughes, for example, speaks authoritatively in the *New York Times*

Sunday supplement for Aeschylus and Euripides. M. Rex Beach presents himself as a medium for the shades of Balzac and Thackeray. And M. Clayton Hamilton, in the *Los Angeles Times* peremptorily sets at rest the possible doubts of even the MM. Hughes and Beach by blanketing every luminary from Sophocles to the but lately interred Verhaeren. Like the others, M. Hamilton holds back Shakespeare for his grand set-piece. "I am convinced," cries M. Hamilton, "that Shakespeare, if he were alive today, would write more readily for the movies than for our modern speaking stage! His technique, without further practice, would fit him to write scenarios for the motion pictures. His many brief battle scenes, for instance, read almost precisely like excerpts from

a script prepared meticulously for the screen! If Shakespeare still retained a hankering for literature, he could always write his sonnets on the side."

Thus, once again, does our old comrade Sig Freud step up to the plate and whack the ball over the fence. Hughes strives to support his self-esteem after taking the lowly job in the movies that the dignified Samuel Merwin turned down. Beach tries hard to hold up his head as president of the Authors' League of America. Hamilton, after years of college professor criticism, seeks to save the remnants of his Goldwyned dignity. And there are a dozen others, each groping bravely for a convenient and deceptive false-face. What pitiable antics! What tragic hanswursts! Quick, Pedro, the seltzer siphon!



Oblation

By George O'Neil

MY singing of your loveliness is done.
I have told all it means and told again
The way its ardour, splendid as the sun,
Makes all my soul a solitude of pain.

What can I say I have not said before
But that the nearness of your face last night
Adds to the chalice of my thoughts one more
Treasure of suffering and sharp delight?

Could I become more lyrical today
For some new shadow in a word you spoke?
For some dear gesture or a startling way
Familiar beauty in your glance awoke?

Though every hour I should have joy to claim,
Though every hour another song has died,
My heart shall burn with their imperfect flame
And I shall go in silence at your side.

The Mummy in the Museum

By Ethel Talbot Scheffauer

LONG since they laid the jewels on thine eyes,
 Wrapped thee in silks to be the queen of Death,
 And burned the sacred oils, whose mystic breath
Heavy about thy golden body lies:
And all thy lovers, weeping and with sighs
 Stood by the gates and called on Astoreth—
 "Behold who comes, Queen of the world beneath,
Our lady Isis, beautiful and wise."

The desert winds have hidden Babylon,
 The rose-red city is a grain of sand,
 Blown up and down the desert without rest:
But thou art rearisen to the sun—
 Nor shall thy worship wither from the land
 Till the years eat the cities of the West.



SUCCESS in love implies the ability to repeat to the lady of today, with the same warmth, the same sentiments you repeated to the lady of yesterday.



THERE is no real difference between an optimist and a pessimist. The difference is between their wives.



WHEN a woman is frank with a man, it is a sign that she doesn't think it worth while to fool him.



MARRIAGE: Paradise. Divorce: Mecca.



Shelby

By Charles Hanson Towne

I

WHEN I sit down to write of Shelby—Lucien Atterwood Shelby, the author, whose romantic books you must have read, or at least heard of—I find myself at some difficulty to know where to begin. I knew him so well at one time—so little at another; and men, like houses, change with the years. Today's tenant in some old mansion may not view the garden as you did long ago; and the friend of a man's later years may not hold the same opinions the acquaintance of an earlier period once formed.

I think it best to begin with the time I met Shelby on the newspaper where we both, as cub reporters, worked. That was exactly twenty years ago.

The boys didn't take to Shelby. He was too dapper, too good-looking, and he always carried a stick, as he called it; we were unregenerate enough to say cane. And, most loathsome of all, he had an English accent—though he was born in Illinois, we afterwards learned. You can imagine how this accent nettled us, for we were all unassuming lads—chaps, Shelby would have called us—and we detested "side."

But how this new acquisition to the staff could write! It bothered us to see him hammer out a story in no time, for most of us had to work over our copy, and we made Hanscher, the old managing editor, raving mad sometimes with our dilatoriness. I am afraid that in those sadly distant days we frequented too many bars, and no doubt we wasted some of our energy and decreased our efficiency. But every young reporter drank more or less; and when Shelby didn't mix with us, and we dis-

covered that he took red wine with his dinner at Mouquin's—invariably alone—we hated him more than ever.

I remember well how Stanton, the biggest-hearted fellow the Lord ever let live, announced one night in the copyroom that he was going to get Shelby tight or die in the attempt, and how loud a laugh went up at his expense.

"It can't be done," was the verdict.

The man hadn't enough humanity, we figured. He was forever dramatizing himself, forever attitudinizing. And those various suits of his—how they agonized us! We were slouches, I know, with rumped hair and, I fear, not over-particular as to our linen during the greater part of the week. Some of us had families to support, even in those young days—or at least a father or a mother up the State to whom we had to send a monthly cheque out of our meagre wages.

I can't say that we were envious of Shelby because of his single-blessedness—he was only twenty-two at that time; but it hurt us to know that he didn't really have to work in Herald Square, and that he had neat bachelor quarters down in Gramercy Park, and a respectable club or two, and week-ended almost where he chose. His blond hair was always beautifully plastered over a fine brow, and he would never soil his forehead by wearing a green shade when he bent over his typewriter late at night. That would have robbed him of some of his dignity, made him look anything but the English gentleman he was so anxious to appear.

I think he looked upon us as just so much dust beneath his feet. He would say "Good evening" in a way that irri-

tated every one of us—as though the words had to be got out somehow, and he might as well say them and get them over with, and as though he dreaded any reply. You couldn't have slapped him on the back even if you had felt the impulse; he wasn't the to-be-slapped kind. And of course that means that he wouldn't have slapped any of us, either. And he was the type you couldn't call by his first name.

Looking back, I sometimes think of all that he missed in the way of good-fellowship; for we were the most decent staff in New York, as honest and generous and warmly human a bunch as anyone could hope to find. We were ambitious, too, mostly college men, and we had that passion for good writing, perhaps not in ourselves, but in others, which is so often the newspaper man's special endowment. We were swift to recognize a fine passage in one another's copy; and praise from old Hanscher meant a royal little dinner at Engel's, with mugs of cream ale, and an hour's difference in our arrival at the office next day. Oh, happy, vanished times! Magic moments that peeped through the grayness of hard work, and made the whole game so worth while.

Well, Stanton won out. He told us about it afterward.

On the pretext that he wanted to ask Shelby's advice about some important personal matter, he urged him to let him give him as good a meal as Mouquin could provide, with a certain vintage of French wine which he knew Shelby was fond of. There were cocktails to begin with, though Shelby had intimated more than once that he abominated the bourgeois American habit of indulging in such poison. And there was an onion soup *au gratin*, a casserole, and artichokes, and special coffee, and I don't know what else.

"He got positively human," Stanton put it, later, as we clustered 'round him in the copyroom. (Shelby hadn't turned up.) "I don't like him, you know; and at first it was hard to get through the soup; but I acted up, gave him a song and dance about my mythical business

matter—I think he feared I was going to 'touch him'—and finally got a little tipsy myself. From then on it was easy. It was like a game."

It seems that afterwards, arm in arm, they walked out into Sixth Avenue in the soft snow—it was winter, and the Burgundy had done the trick—and Shelby, his inhibitions completely gone, began to weep.

"Why are you crying?" Stanton asked, his own voice thick.

"Because you fellers don't like me!" Chelby choked out.

The accent and the stick went together into the gutter, Stanton laughingly told us. An immortal moment! The poseur with his mask off, at last! Beneath all that grease-paint and chalatanism there was a solid, suffering, lonely man; and even in his own dazed condition Stanton was quick to recognize it, and to rejoice in the revelation.

Moreover, he was flattered, as we always are, when our own judgments have proved right. Stanton had deliberately set out to find the real Shelby—and he had.

"A man who can write as he can has something in him—that I know," he had said generously more than once. He made us see that he had not been wrong.

But it was not the real Shelby that returned to the office. That is where he missed his great opportunity. Back strutted the pompous, stained-glass, pitiful imitation of an Englishman, in a louder suit than ever, and with a big new cane that made the old one look flimsy.

We despised him more than ever. For we would have taken him within our little circle gladly after Stanton's sure report; and there would have been chance after chance for him to make good with us. But no; he preferred the pose of aloofness, and his face betrayed that he was ashamed of that one night's weakness. He never alluded to his evening with Stanton; and when Minckle, who was certain the ice had been broken, put his arm around his shoulder the next day, he looked and drawled,

"I say, old top, I wish you wouldn't." Of course that finished him with us.

"He can go to the devil," we said.

We wanted him fired, obliterated; but the very next evening there was a murder in Harlem, and old Hanscher sent Shelby to cover it, and his first-page story was the talk of the town. We were sports enough to tell him what a wonderful thing he had done. He only smiled, said "Thanks," and went on at his typewriter.

II

It was shortly after this that Marguerite Davis assailed New York with her beauty—a young actress with a wealth of hair and the kind of eyes you dream of. She captured the critics and the public alike. Her name was on every lip, and the Broadway theater where she starred in "The Great Happiness" was packed to the doors. Such acclaim was never received by any young woman. We heard that Shelby went every night for a week to see some part of the play—he couldn't, because of his assignments, view the entire performance; and it was Minckle who, after the piece had been running a month in New York, found a photograph of the star in the top drawer of Shelby's desk. He had gone there for a match—you know how informal we newspaper men are. Moreover, the picture had been autographed.

"I wish you wouldn't touch that." It was Shelby's voice. Of course he had come in at the very moment poor Minckle made his startling discovery.

With quiet dignity, and with a flush on his cheeks, Shelby took the photograph from Minckle's hand, and replaced it in the drawer.

"I always keep matches on top of my desk—when I have any," he said, in a voice like ice.

There was no denying his justified anger. No man likes to have his heart secrets disclosed; and Shelby knew that even the Associated Press could not give more publicity to the discovery than Minckle could. He dreaded—and just-

ly, I think—the wagging of heads that would be noticed from now on, the pitiless interest in his amour.

Stanton was the only one of us, except myself, later, who ever was privileged, if you care to put it that way, to visit Shelby's apartment—diggings, Shelby always called them. There, on the walls, he told us, were innumerable photographs of Miss Davis, in every conceivable pose. They looked out at one from delicate and heavy frames; and some were stuck informally in the mirror of his dresser, as though casually placed there to lighten up the beginning of each day, or perhaps because there was no other space for them.

"You must know her awfully well," Stanton ventured once.

"I have never met the lady," was all Shelby said; and Stanton told me there was a sigh that followed the remark.

"What!" this full-blooded young American reporter cried, astounded. "You've never met this girl, and yet you have all these—all these pictures of her?"

"I don't want to lose my dream, my illusion," was Shelby's answer.

A man who would not meet the toast of Broadway—and Fifth Avenue, for that matter—if he could, was, to Stanton and the rest of us, inconceivable.

It was at the close of that winter that Shelby left us. Some there were who said he was suffering from a broken heart. At any rate, he began to free-lance; and the first of those fascinating romantic short stories that he did so well appeared in one of the magazines. There was always a poignant note in them. They dealt with lonely men who brooded in secret on some unattainable woman of dreams. This sounds precious; but the tales were saved from utter banality by a certain richness of style, a flow and fervour that carried the reader on through twenty pages without his knowing it. They struck a fresh note, they were filled with the fire of youth, and the scenes were always laid in some far country, which gave them, oddly enough, a greater reality. Shelby could

pile on adjectives as no other writer of his day, I always thought, and he could weave a tapestry, or create an embroidery of words that was almost magical.

He made a good deal of money, I believe, during those first few months after he went away from Herald Square. Apparently he had no friends, and, as I have said, invariably he seemed to dine alone at Mouquin's, at a corner table. Afterwards, he would go around to the Café Martin, then in its glory, where Fifth Avenue and Broadway meet, for his coffee and a golden liqueur and a cigarette. That flaming room, which we who were fortunate enough to have our youth come to a glorious fruition in 1902, attracted us all like a magnet. Here absinthe dripped into tall glasses, and the seats around the sides, the great mirrors and the golden curtains, which fluttered in summer and remained austere in place in winter, made a little heaven for us all, and life one long cry of joy. Here women, like strange flowers that bloomed only at night, smiled and laughed the hours away; and the low whirr of Broadway drifted in, while the faint thunder of Fifth Avenue lent an added mystery to the place, as though the troubled world were shut out but could be reached again in an instant, if you wished to reach it.

Shelby liked to be seen in such places. He said he felt that he was on the Continent, and he liked to get nervously excited over a liqueur and a mazagan of coffee, and then flee to his cozy lodgings in Gramercy Park and produce page after page of closely written manuscript.

The pictures of Marguerite Davis remained a part of the furnishings of those rooms of his—that we heard; and I knew it directly shortly after this. For I, too, left the newspaper, and went into the magazine-editing game. I found a berth on that same popular periodical to which Shelby was then contributing his matchless stories; and part of my job was to see him frequently, take him to luncheon or dinner, talk over his future plans with him, discuss the possibility of his doing a novelette

which later he could expand into a full-sized volume and thereby gain an added vogue.

It was during this period that I came to know him so well—came to know him, that is, as intimately as he wished to be known. Always there was a cloak of reserve which he put on with me, as with everyone. I tried to broaden his horizon, to have him meet other men—and women. He would go with me once or twice to some party, for he was clever enough to see that he must not offend me, just as he knew that I must not offend him. We were too valuable to each other, and in that odd mixing up of our affairs in this world here we were, after so brief an interval, in the relationship of editor and contributor.

He knew, however, that I had always admired his literary gifts; but I confess that the feet of clay began to creep into view when he told me, one night at the Martin, that his favorite novelist of all time was—Marion Crawford! That explained so much to me that I had not understood before. I smiled tolerantly, for my own taste ran much higher; and I seemed from then on to sense a certain cheapness in Shelby's mind, as if I had lifted the cloth over a chair and discovered cherrywood where I had hoped to find Chippendale. It is through such marginalia that we come to know people. I could not reconcile Shelby's delicate style with so forlorn a taste for other literary dishes. I said then that he would never become a great writer. He would simply mark time, artistically speaking, after reaching a certain point. Thereafter everything he produced would be but repetition.

I was right. His virgin novel proved a rank failure. The man could do nothing sustained. He was essentially a person of brilliant flashes. The book, called, as you may remember, "The Shadow and the Substance," was a *tour de force* in vapid writing, and it almost severed his literary jugular vein. All the reviewers, delighted with a chance to play upon his title, said it contained far more shadow than substance.

Shelby had had easy sailing up till that time. His pride was hurt by the reception of the book; and he told me he was going to flee to London—which he straightway did. Then I heard of him in his beloved England; and from there he sent me several short manuscripts filled with his old grace and charm of style—a sort of challenge to his critics. But always we waited for the story with a punch; for the story that would show there was a soul in the fellow. These pale blossoms were all very well—as magazine bait to capture the young-girl reader of our smart periodical; but too many of them cloyed. It was as though you served a banquet and made *hors d'œuvres* the main dish.

Yet his popularity with our readers was tremendous. Letters, addressed in feminine handwriting, came to him in our care every day, from all over the land; and he was no doubt flattered by silly women who were fascinated even more by his fiction after we printed his romantic photograph. For he had a profile that captivated many a girl, eyes that seemed to speak volumes; and no doubt there were numerous boudoirs that contained his picture, just as his rooms contained so many likenesses of Marguerite Davis.

I next heard of him in Egypt, where he said he was gathering colour for a new romance. He stayed away several months, and then blew in one morning, better-looking than ever, brown and clear-eyed. He had been all over the Orient, and he said his note-book was full of material. Now he could sit down quietly and write. He had so much to put on paper, he told me.

But he hadn't. He dreamed adventure, he craved adventure; but nothing ever happened to him. His trips were invariably on glassy seas. He traveled by himself—he hadn't even one chum whom he cared to have share his joys; and though he penetrated the jungles of Africa at one time, the lions remained mysteriously in hiding, and the jaguars didn't even growl.

I remember that this came out one night at a dinner party he and I went

to at the home of a friend of mine. A Captain Diehart was there—a most delightful man of fifty or so, who had just returned from a trip around the world; and he fascinated us all by his lively recounting of certain dramatic happenings in the Far East. Zulus had captured him once, and he had come perilously close to death on so many occasions that it was a miracle that he should be sitting here now, sipping his champagne and smoking his cigarette.

On the way home—I had a habit of seeing Shelby to his doorstep during this period—he turned to me and said:

"Isn't it strange, Allison, that nothing of that kind has ever happened to me? I move about all the while, I look eagerly for excitement, I hope always for the supreme adventure—and I never find it. Yet I love romance. Why does it never come to me?"

I was silent for a few paces. I felt so sorry for him. For once he had told me what was in his heart.

"You're in love with love," I said finally. "That's what's the matter with your work, Shelby, if you'll let me say so. I wonder if you have really loved a woman—or a friend, even? If the great thing should come into your life, wouldn't it illuminate your whole literary expression? Wouldn't you write eighty per cent better? Wouldn't everything you do be sharpened splendidly alive? Why don't you meet—Miss Davis?"

"My God, man!" he let out. "Won't you allow me to keep at least one dream?"

He tried to be tragic, right there in the street; but I read him like a book.

"Don't be an ass, old fellow. You're not a poet, you know—you're a happy dabbler in prose; but you've got to wake up—you've got to have some vital experience before you can hope to reach the top. This vicarious loving isn't worth a tin whistle. You're like a soldier in the barracks compared to one who's in the thick of the fight. Wake up, shake yourself, get out of your shell, and see how much greater you'll be!"

He didn't like that. He never liked the truth. How few of us do!

The next thing I knew he was off for Japan, and he sent me pretty post-cards of geisha-girls, and tried to indicate that he was having the time of his life, at last. But there was something false—I cannot quite express it—about his messages. They didn't ring true at all. He knew it, and he knew that I knew it.

III

WHEN he came back, after a year or so, there was a vast change in him. He was more sure of himself; and in the Martin one night he told me how various other periodicals were now after him. His rate would have to go up, and all that sort of thing. He liked me, and *The Athenian*, but one must grow, and there were wider fields for him to penetrate; and it was all right that we had made him what he was, but in the final summing up a man must think of himself, and one's career was one's career, you know. He brought in several fashionable names, I remember—I don't recall just how he did it; but he tried to appear casual when he spoke of Mrs. Thus-and-So, who had a mansion on Fifth avenue; and he indicated that he often dined there now. They had met in the Orient, and Reggie was a corker, too, and he might summer at Newport, and what did I think of an offer of five thousand dollars from a great weekly for a serial dealing with high life?

He sickened me that evening. Yes, he was a prig, a snob, and I don't know what else. Frankly and coldly, I told him to go to the dickens. Our magazine had existed without him once upon a time, and it could go on existing without him. I was sorry to see him make such a fool of himself.

His whole attitude changed.

"Oh, don't think I mean all I say, Allison!" he pleaded. "I'll continue to give you something now and again. After all, I've got a wide audience with you people, and I don't quite wish to lose it."

That irritated me more than ever—

his stupid patronage, his abominable self-assurance. I remember paying the check very grandiloquently, and leaving him alone—as he was so fond of being, at one time—in the center of the room.

When we met thereafter of course we were exceedingly chilly to each other. Once I saw him with Mrs. Thus-and-So, and he cut me dead. I suppose I looked painfully inadequate, utterly unimportant to him that afternoon. He had moved to higher circles; and after all I was only a struggling young editor, who dressed rather badly—all right for certain occasions, but hardly one to be seen bowing to at a moment like this! I read his mind, you see; and again he knew that I knew; and of course he hated me from that time forth.

It was at this time that the phrase, "See America First," came into such wide circulation. It was considered the thing to look over the Grand Canyon or the Yellowstone Park, or to run down to Florida, rather than cross the ocean; and I next heard of Shelby in the West, diligently writing—for other magazines. He had brought out one more novel, "The Orange Sunset," and it had gone far better than the first, which must have heartened him and given him a fresh impetus. He changed book publishers, too—went to a smarter firm who did much for him in the way of publicity. And special editions, in limp covers, helped his sales. Even his short stories were brought out, and as little brochures, in gorgeous bindings with colored illustrations, a single tale would attract the romantic maiden. It was a chocolate-cream appeal; but cream-drops have their uses in this weary world.

The San Francisco earthquake—I believe they always allude to it out there as "the fire"—occurred—that next year; and Stanton, who had succeeded old Hanscher in Herald Square—the latter had died in harness at his desk—heard, in that mysterious way that newspaper men hear everything, that Shelby was in the ill-fated city when the earth rocked on that disastrous night. Immediately he telegraphed him, "Write two thou-

sand words of your experiences, your sensations in calamity. Wire them immediately. Big check awaits you."

Silence followed. Stanton and I talked it over, and we concluded that Shelby must have been killed.

"If he isn't dead, here at last is the great adventure he has been longing for," I couldn't help saying.

No word ever came from him; but two weeks later he blew into town, and again Stanton found out that he had arrived.

"Why didn't you answer my wire?" he telephoned him.

"I couldn't," Shelby rather whimpered over the line. "You see, Stanton, old top, the thing got me too deeply. I just couldn't—I hope you'll understand—write one word of it."

But it was not the grief of the man who feels so deeply that he cannot shed a tear. It was the craven in Shelby that had shocked the meretricious Shelby into insensibility, into utter inarticulateness in one of the crowning disasters of the ages.

In the face of something so real, so terribly real, he was but a puny worm, with no vocabulary to express his emotions—for he had none, save the emotion of fear. That we knew from people who had been at the same hotel where he was stopping when the great shock came. He ran through the corridors like a frightened doe, in pajamas of silk, with wonderful tassels of green. He wrung his hands, and babbled like a lunatic. "Oh, my manuscripts! My manuscripts!" were the only intelligible words that came from his white lips.

Think of it! He thought of those piffing stories—those stories of unreality, when he was experiencing the biggest thing that ever came into his little life! Do you wonder that we cared even less for him after that? That I refused to see him at all, and that even wise, understanding Bill Stanton couldn't touch his syndicate stuff?

IV

THERE is, of necessity, a hiatus here. One cannot write of what one does not

know. I lost all trace of Shelby during the intervening years, except that I saw spasmodic productions of his in various periodicals, and guessed that he must be working in those same bachelor quarters, probably still surrounded with the pictures of Miss Davis. There were rumors, also, that he went frequently to the opera with very grand people, and dined and supped on Lower as well as Upper Fifth Avenue. It was whispered in editorial circles that he had come to care more as to where he could dine next week than how he could write next week. You see, he was most personable, and he could flatter ladies, and drink like a gentleman, and wear his evening clothes to perfection—he still had them made in London—and that sort of unmarried man is always in demand in New York. Add to these social graces the piquancy of a little literary reputation, and you have the perfect male butterfly.

Shelby fluttered his way through the corridors and drawing-rooms of the rich, and his later work, if you will notice, always touches upon what is called smart society. We heard that he never mentioned his newspaper days—that he was not a little ashamed of having spent so many months bending over a typewriter in a dingy, cluttered office. Yet it was there he had learned to write; and had he been true to the best traditions of those days of exciting assignments, how far he might have gone on the long literary road!

The war came. Of course Shelby was beyond the draft age—quite far beyond it; but he had no ties, was in perfect physical condition, and he might have found in the trenches another contact that would have made a thorough man of him. Again, he had always loved England and the English so dearly that it would not have been surprising had he offered his services in some way to that country when she and her allies so needed assistance. But the lists of those who offered their lives then may be searched in vain for Shelby's name.

I heard vaguely that he had gone to Borneo in September, 1914; and there

he remained, "to avoid such a nasty mess as the world had come to." You see, his was a process of evasion. He loved romance when it was sweet and beautiful; but he had not the vision to understand that there is also a hard, stern, iron romance—the romance of men's companionships in difficult places.

How he did it, I never knew; but he returned from Borneo a year later, and handed to his publishers a novel called "The Blowing Rose," which dealt, as its title would indicate, with anything but the War—a sentimental tale of the old South, full of lattices and siestas through long, slow afternoons, and whispered words of love, and light conversations at dusk, and all that sort of rot. And all the while, outside his door the guns were booming; at the gates of the world a perilous storm had broken. The earth was on fire; but while Rome burned, he, like Nero, played a fiddle—and was content.

Then he wrote a comedy of British manners, and nothing would do but that he must himself journey to London, in war-time, to see about its production there.

Stanton and I happened to see him the day before he sailed. We met him face to face on Fifth avenue, and he bowed to us. We returned the salute, little dreaming that never again would we see him.

For Shelby sailed on the *Lusitania*.

There must be a hiatus here, too; for no one saw him die. The story runs

that he must have been in his cabin when the awful moment came—that he was drowned like a rat in a trap. I wonder. And I wonder if he knew in that agonizing instant that he was doomed? But was it not better to die than to emerge again from so great a calamity—so historical an episode—as he had once before emerged, and find himself again inarticulate? At least there can be some glory for him now; for one likes to think that, after all, he might have told us how he felt in so supreme a moment, and linked it, through his delicate art, with his San Francisco sensations. Could those have been revived, and put upon paper? Could Shelby ever have made a fine gesture, known himself as we knew him, and told the truth?

I doubt it. For, looking over his published works tonight, I find only one or two epigrams worthy of a brief existence. And one of those I am sure he filched from an English wit, and redressed it for his purposes. That was the only time he cared for American tailoring.

But poor Shelby! Vicarious, indeed, were all the experiences, save two, of his shallow days. But in the face of each, he was speechless. There is a law of averages, a law of compensation, you know. The balance wheel turns; the tides change; the sands of occasion shift. Fate gave this man one overwhelmingly glorious chance to say something. He was mute. The second time she sealed his lips forever.



OPERA: A theatrical combination of words and music.
 Operation: A very painful experience.



The Farrell Case

(A One-Act Play)

By George M. Cohan

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In the order of their appearance)

FRANK BERKLEY
ARTHUR WILSON
MISS WILLIAMSON
ANTHONY GILBERT
STEVE McCAFFREY
JOHN MADIGAN, a janitor
MISS FARRELL
AN OLD MAN
A number of policemen

SCENE: A room in the office of Berkley, Berkley and Berkley. At the rise of the curtain BERKLEY enters the room through a window after opening it in burglar fashion. Once in the room he looks about to make sure of his ground; goes to desk, opens drawer, takes revolver from same, examines it, makes sure that it is loaded, puts it into his pocket, then goes to R., opens door slowly and peers into the next room. He pulls the door to, conveying to the audience that he has seen someone within, tiptoes over toward safe L. Just as he is about to work the combination the telephone on desk rings. He moves quickly to 'phone, lifts the receiver and talks into the 'phone in a muffled tone.

BERKLEY

Hello! . . . Yes. . . . Good God! When did that happen? . . . At 12 o'clock tonight? . . . Is she dead? . . . Good God! Have you notified the police? . . . What does Chief Corrigan say? . . . Murder? . . . Good God!

(A pistol shot is heard off R. He hangs up the receiver and looks off in direction of door R., then takes out his revolver and starts on tiptoes R.)

WILSON

(Enters door L. and calls to BERKLEY in stage whisper.) Frank! Frank!

BERKLEY

(Turns and sees WILSON coming toward him.) Arthur!

WILSON

They're after you, Frank! I just came from Police Headquarters. The girl's sister is there and has told the whole story.

BERKLEY

(Thinks.) Good God! Where is the necklace?

WILSON

Here. (Hands him a jewel-case.) I've been hiding in the cellar for an hour.

BERKLEY

(Looks at jewel in case.) Put it in the safe. Hurry! (The 'phone rings. BERKLEY rushes to it and WILSON goes to safe.) Hello! . . . Yes. . . . I understand. Listen! Rush an automo-

bile to the house on Ninth Street. . . .
Get that girl out of the way. I don't
care a damn what you do! Kill her if
necessary. . . . Those are my orders.
(*Hangs up.*)

WILSON

(*Who has put jewel-case in safe and
now comes toward table.*) Frank!
What are you saying, man!

BERKLEY

You keep out of this, Arthur. My
life's at stake as well as yours.
(*A knock at door.*)

WILSON

See who that is.

(*Sits at desk. BERKLEY goes to door
upstage and exits. WILSON watches
him off, then goes quickly to 'phone.*
Get me 3100 Spring—and hurry! (*He
hangs up.*)

BERKLEY

(*Enters.*) Miss Grace Williamson
to see you.

WILSON

Very well.

BERKLEY

(*Comes down to WILSON, hands him
pistol, then goes to door and admits the
girl.*) Come right in, Miss.

MISS WILLIAMSON

(*Entering.*) Oh, how do you do,
Mr. Wilson. I'm sorry to come on such
an errand, but it's life or death and
means so much to so many.

WILSON

I understand. Won't you be seated?

MISS WILLIAMSON

Thanks. (*She sits.*)

WILSON

Have you brought the letters?

MISS WILLIAMSON

Here they are. (*Produces them from
handbag.*)

WILSON

All of them? (*Takes them.*)

MISS WILLIAMSON

No, one is missing.

WILSON

One missing? Good God! Where
could it have gone?

MISS WILLIAMSON

It was stolen from the house on Ninth
Street the night the Farrell girl disap-
peared.

(*BERKLEY, who has gone to water-
cooler to take a drink, drops the glass
and it falls with a crash. WILSON and
MISS WILLIAMSON both turn and look
at him. He stands watching them both.*)

BERKLEY

It's a lie! This is a conspiracy against
me—against the United States Govern-
ment, and, by God, I'll not stand by and
hear my death sentence read without
sending the whole lot of you devils to
the chair!

WILSON

Be careful, Berkley.

BERKLEY

I'm not afraid of you, Wilson. I'll
tell the truth.

MISS WILLIAMSON

(*To WILSON.*) Who is this man?

BERKLEY

My name is Frank Berkley.

MISS WILLIAMSON

Good God! (*To WILSON.*) Why
didn't you tell me?

WILSON

(*Laughs.*) So now you understand!
You see, my little lady, that at last
you've got to come across with the
truth. No more lies, do you hear? Now
then, where is Anthony Gilbert?

BERKLEY

Yes, where is he?

GILBERT

(*Enters door upstage, unheard and
unseen.*) Right here! (*They all turn
and face a pointed revolver which he is*

aiming at them.) I'll ask you all to step quietly into that room over there. (*Indicates door R.*) And to do this without a sign or a sound. I've got a little business to transact with your desk and your safe, Mr. Wilson, so be kind enough to hurry.

MISS WILLIAMSON

Anthony, what do you mean?

GILBERT

You go to hell! I'm done with you! I knew you'd bring those letters here. But I've got the real one; the one written by your sister to this man Berkley, which is evidence enough to hang you all. Step into that room, please, as quickly and quietly as you can.

(*The three move toward door R. GILBERT enters and he is followed by McCaffrey.*)

GILBERT

(*To McCaffrey.*) Lock that door, McCaffrey, as soon as they are on the other side.

McCaffrey

All right, Chief.

(*The three characters exit into the other room, McCaffrey locking the door.*)

GILBERT

(*To McCaffrey.*) I'll take that key. (*Holds out his hand.*)

McCaffrey

No, I'm damned if you will, Gilbert! (*Puts key in his pocket.*)

GILBERT

What do you mean?

McCaffrey

I mean that you're not going to double cross me tonight. I want what's coming to me, Mr. Gilbert, and I won't hand these people over to you till I get it.

GILBERT

Damn your soul! (*He pulls the trigger of his revolver, but it does not explode.*)

S. S.—Oct.—5

McCaffrey

Oh, I made sure it wasn't loaded before I handed it to you. I expected something like this. Now then, Mr. Gilbert, I want my money, or you go right back to the house on Ninth Street. Do you get me? (*He points his pistol at GILBERT. The 'phone rings.*) See who that is. Do as I tell you, Gilbert.

GILBERT

(*Hesitates, then moves to 'phone.*) Hello! . . . What? . . . Just a moment. (*To McCaffrey.*) It's Police Headquarters.

McCaffrey

(*Thinks.*) You lie!

GILBERT

So help me God! Somebody called them up from here, they say.

McCaffrey

It's a trap.

GILBERT

What will I say?

McCaffrey

A mistake—wrong number—then hang up.

GILBERT

(*Into the 'phone.*) There must be some mistake. Nobody called from here. (*Hangs up. A knock at the door is heard.*)

McCaffrey

See who that is. (*GILBERT hesitates.*) Do as I tell you, Gilbert.

GILBERT

(*Hesitates, then goes to door and exits.*)

McCaffrey

(*Goes quickly to 'phone.*) Operator, get that same number again. . . . Yes. . . . Hurry up. (*Hangs up.*)

GILBERT

(*Re-enters.*) It's the janitor from the house on Ninth Street. He wants to see Mr. Berkley at once.

McCAFFREY

The janitor to see Berkley! Does he know Berkley?

GILBERT

I don't think so. He's in a terribly nervous state.

McCAFFREY

Show him in.

GILBERT

(*Goes to door.*) Come in, Madigan.
(*MADIGAN enters and looks around.*)

McCAFFREY

What do you want, my good man?

MADIGAN

(*Who speaks with a heavy brogue.*)
I want to see Mr. Berkley. Are you Mr. Berkley, sir?

McCAFFREY

Yes, I am Mr. Berkley.

MADIGAN

I'm John Madigan, sir, the janitor of the house in Ninth Street where the poor thing was killed. I've come to confess to you, sir, that I saw the crime committed and 'tis only now that I've been able to pluck up courage enough to tell it all, sir.

McCAFFREY

All right, Madigan, let's hear it all. Who killed the girl?

MADIGAN

'Twas a man named Gilbert, sir—Anthony Gilbert.

GILBERT AND McCAFFREY

What!!

MADIGAN

Yes, sir, that's his name—Anthony Gilbert.

GILBERT

(*After a pause.*) Would you know this man Gilbert—if you were to see him again?

MADIGAN

Of course I would, sir. I could never

forget the man. I stood as close to him as I'm standing to you now.

GILBERT

My name is Anthony Gilbert.

MADIGAN

What!

GILBERT

I am Anthony Gilbert.

MADIGAN

You are Anthony Gilbert!

GILBERT

That's my name.

MADIGAN

But Mr. McCaffrey said that the other man's name was Anthony Gilbert.

McCAFFREY

Mr. McCaffrey!

MADIGAN

(*To McCaffrey.*) Yes, sir. He was the man who stole the necklace when Gilbert killed the girl.

McCAFFREY

Why, my name is McCaffrey.

MADIGAN

What! Not Steve McCaffrey!

McCAFFREY

That's my name.

MADIGAN

(*To Gilbert.*) And you are Anthony Gilbert?

GILBERT

I am.

MADIGAN

(*Whips out two revolvers and covers them. Speaks without brogue.*) Hands up, gentlemen! (*They throw up their hands, and at the same moment two police officers enter from door upstage.*) Take these men to Police Headquarters.

McCAFFREY

What does this mean?

MADIGAN

It means that I've got you two dirty

skunks just where you belong—in the arms of the law. Take them away, boys.

(The two officers come down stage and each one takes a prisoner.)

GILBERT

(To MADIGAN.) Who are you?

MADIGAN

My name is Parkinson, of the Central Office staff. *(Shows his star.)* All I need now is to round up Berkley, Wilson and the Williamson woman, and I will have solved the mystery of the house in Ninth Street.

(Three pistol shots are heard off stage, coming from room R.)

ALL

Good God!

(The 'phone rings.)

MADIGAN

(At 'phone.) Hello! . . . Police Headquarters? . . . Just a moment. *(To McCaffrey.)* Did someone call Police Headquarters? *(He turns to the 'phone as McCaffrey makes no reply.)* No, there must be some mistake, no one called from here. *(Hangs up.)* What is this? Are you trying to set a trap for me?

(As he speaks this line he moves over near one of the policemen, who hits MADIGAN over the head with a club and the latter falls to the floor.)

1ST POLICEMAN

I've got him at last, the yellow dog! I took a solemn oath I'd get him, and, by God, I've got him!

2ND POLICEMAN

Never mind any grandstand speeches, let's get the money. He's got it on him somewhere. *(Rushes over to MADIGAN's body and takes a wallet and letters from coat pocket.)*

GILBERT

What does this mean?

McCAFFREY

Who are you two men?

1ST POLICEMAN

Never mind who we are.

2ND POLICEMAN

Yes, don't ask too many questions. *(They divide the money as they are speaking. There is a knock at the door. All four stand perfectly quiet. There is a second knock.)*

1ST POLICEMAN

(To 2ND POLICEMAN.) See who that is. *(2ND POLICEMAN goes upstage and exits. 1ST POLICEMAN turns to GILBERT and McCAFFREY.)* Get in that room, both of you. Hurry up. *(The two men hesitate.)* Do as I say! *(They move to the room at left and exit.)*

2ND POLICEMAN

(Re-enters.) It's the Farrell girl.

1ST POLICEMAN

The Farrell girl! Good God!

2ND POLICEMAN

She came here to see Miss Williamson.

1ST POLICEMAN

Show her in.

2ND POLICEMAN

With the body on the floor? *(Points to MADIGAN's body.)*

1ST POLICEMAN

Do as I tell you!

2ND POLICEMAN

(Calls off.) Right this way, Miss.

MISS FARRELL

(Enters.) Thank you, officer. *(Sees the other officer.)* Is this the office of Berkley, Berkley and Berkley?

1ST POLICEMAN

Yes, Miss Farrell.

MISS FARRELL

Oh, you know who I am?

1ST POLICEMAN

Yes, Miss Farrell. Won't you sit down?

THE FARRELL CASE

MISS FARRELL

Thank you. (*She starts to sit down and sees body of MADIGAN.*) Good God! What is that? (*Over to him.*) Father! Father!

2ND POLICEMAN

Her father!

1ST POLICEMAN

Good God!

MISS FARRELL

Who did this terrible thing? This must be the work of Anthony Gilbert and Steve McCaffrey. I swear to God that I will kill them both.

(*Two pistol shots are heard off left.*)

ALL

Good God!

(*The wind begins to blow outside and the rain dashes against the windows. A lightning and thunder storm breaks.*)

MISS FARRELL

(*Her voice above the storm.*) I swear, father dear, that I will avenge you! I will search the world for the man who committed this horrible crime. I will leave no stone unturned to find the man who killed my father!

2ND POLICEMAN

(*At the window.*) Good God, what a storm!

MISS FARRELL

You shall be avenged, dear father—you shall be avenged!

1ST POLICEMAN

(*Hits the Farrell girl over the head with a club. She falls over the body of her father.*)

2ND POLICEMAN

(*Rushes at him.*) Good God, man, what have you done? Do you realize that you've killed the girl?

1ST POLICEMAN

(*Hits the 2ND POLICEMAN over the*

head with the club and the latter falls over the body of the girl. There is a knock on the door.) Come in.

(*An OLD MAN enters. The POLICEMAN shoots him dead and the OLD MAN falls near the door where he enters.*)

OLD MAN

(*As he falls.*) Good God!

1ST POLICEMAN

(*Rushes to 'phone.*) Get me 3100 Spring. . . . Hello! . . . Hello! Police Headquarters? . . . Send a man to the office of Berkley, Berkley and Berkley right away. Hurry! (*He pulls out pistol and shoots himself in the temple.*) Good God! (*He dies at desk.*)

(*MADIGAN shows signs of life and wriggles himself to a sitting position. Sees the dead men and stares in amazement.*)

MADIGAN

(*As he sees the 'dead men.*) Good God!

(*He struggles to his feet, falls back again, but gets strength enough to drag himself over to phonograph, which is upstage. He touches the spring and starts it playing a brass-band march, one of Sousa's. He faints after starting the machine. There is a sudden crash and the window is broken from the outside. A POLICEMAN enters, gun in hand.*)

POLICEMAN

(*Looks around at the dead bodies.*) Good God!

(*Horses' hoofs and police patrol effect are heard offstage. Another POLICEMAN enters from door upstage. The two officers stand and stare at each other, then both tear off their coats and start a rough-and-tumble fight. The orchestra picks up a gallop for a "Hurry." The two officers roll over and around the stage and finally work into an acrobatic act. Both are turning hand-springs when UNCLE SAM appears in doorway waving the English flag as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

The Lost Art

By *L. M. Hussey*

I

KENNEL learned of Julia's fortunes a few weeks after his return to the United States. The incidents of her history came to him through an old acquaintance, who remembered his former profound attachment and presumed that however modified by time and his marriage something of his former interest might still persist.

To learn these things about Julia seemed natural, for the emotions of his return had been largely reminiscent, the half-sentimental feelings that always arise in the moods of a man who comes back to old scenes upon which he can only look with a retrospective gaze having no longer a rôle in them.

Kennell, especially, was unable to do otherwise than look backward, since he did not identify his future with his native land. He regarded his trip as the last step in an important obligation, about to be permanently fulfilled.

He had come in final acquiescence to the pleading of his wife, and however alienated from the sympathies he had once felt at home, he was not the man to deny her urgent, emotional wish in these last months of her life.

He was rather glad that his personal feeling was one of great shrinking from the trip, for this made it something of a sacrifice and therefore an atonement. Somehow he had never achieved the habit of love with his wife, perhaps because he had burned out his illusions in the flame of his earlier dreams of Julia. His wife had quickly perceived the meagerness of his response to her, and without direct complaint she had nevertheless accused him in subtle ways through-

out the whole decade of their relationship.

Hints first spoken years ago had made him aware of her recognition and at that time he had essayed a sincere and naturally unsuccessful effort to fulfill her want. He found it useless to simulate an ardent posture and in the end she accused him of the sham, told him he was insincere, whereupon he abruptly ceased his unconvincing play-acting. Then his wife assumed the sentimental melancholy that became as much a part of her presence as any of the physical characteristics that identified her—her brown eyes, her rather drooping mouth, her dark hair worn high and severely.

There was no brutality of quarreling between these two, both possessing a common quality of sensitive refinement, but the shadow upon their relationship did not wholly injure the woman. It hurt Kennell. In his sensitiveness he felt that he had cheated this woman, arousing an expectation in her heart that he was wholly unable to fulfill. His sophistication told him that no one would have given her the measure of her dreams, since she was a natural romantic and doomed on that account to an inevitable disillusionment. But this recognition, after all, did not ease the discomfort of his self-accusing, for he realized also that he had given less than her reasonable right.

The last two years, those of her gradually augmented illness, had discovered him in the fruitless effort to substitute an attentive and almost superlative kindness for the romantic gifts that were still her desire. Although he had already thoroughly identified himself as an Oriental, both in material and spir-

itual interests, he readily consented to go back to the United States when the genuine potency of her nostalgia became apparent.

They arrived in New York in the early spring. The season was late, the days bad, and for a time Kennell was afraid that she would scarcely live out the first month of her return.

It was her wish to remain in the city, renew old friendships, see old faces. She realized the uselessness of going to a more favourable climate, since she was beyond the benefit of such influences. She survived the first perilous weeks, her cough lessened, a measure of her strength returned, and Kennell found himself with more time to go about the city and touch on points of his former life.

It was during this period that he learned the history of Julia.

She had been married and widowed, and was living in the comfortable establishment of her late husband, his informant had said. "She doesn't go about much," he added. "A rather solitary, but still handsome, woman, and not on the shelf by any means. Could have married again at least twice in the past year or two, but she seems to prefer her own way."

They talked about her over a luncheon table in the unsentimental surroundings of a fashionable restaurant with none of the caressing grace that had become the accompaniment of dining in Kennell's foreign life. Nevertheless, after parting from his friend, he did not find it difficult to achieve a thoroughly reminiscent mood, for the discomforts, the lack of comradeship in American life did not depress him, viewing his stay, as he did, no more than a temporary necessity.

It was one of the first agreeable afternoons of the season, and Kennell walked down the Avenue, a unit in the crowd, but emotionally detached from it, as if he were one of another race. He automatically obeyed all the necessary conventions, he did not hurry, he jostled no one, he paused at the corners when the flow of vehicular traffic made it nec-

essary, but his thoughts were back in another decade.

Without the pain of any profound regret he was considering, with a large measure of objectivity, the features of his grand passion. It pleased him to recall incidents rather than emotions, save when incident and emotion were composed in an inextricable union. He looked back upon romantic, moonlit evenings, upon a certain week when both were in the same mountain hotel and had quarreled one day and parted forever and forgiven each other a few hours later with rapturous pledges of renewed faith, upon hours when he had laboriously confected the only literary venture of his life—the poems he felt impelled to write for Julia—and, again, upon their last parting.

That had come one evening; he remembered their quarrel. His mind brought back the sudden, undignified personalities. It had grown out of trivial differences of temperament, a momentary breach of mutual sympathy, and had suddenly grown up into serious proportions. In the end he had accused Julia of interest in another; she had resented his words with a swift anger. They parted; he had not gone back, waiting for her to send; she had not recalled him, waiting for him to come.

It was foolish now and had all the incredible colour of past acts whose substance, in retrospect, is always so slight, and whose consequence frequently so profound. Walking through the crowd, Kennell neither smiled at his memories nor sighed, but only wondered.

Then he found his mind leaping on through the years to the immediate moment, as if transported from one world to another on a magic carpet. How did Julia look today?—and how would she receive him?

It was with something of a shocked surprise that he realized the possibility of calling upon her, for his mind, looking only into the past, had just in that second returned to immediacies. It was astonishing to think that both of them were still realities, he and Julia, that

they might meet, clasp hands, talk together again.

This realization gave him no thrill, for he was not deluded with any sudden hope or desire. But his curiosity persisted. It was the natural residuum of a former profound interest.

With these thoughts he tried to vision the changes ten years would have made. He recalled his acquaintance's somewhat blunt description—"a rather solitary, but still handsome, woman."

If this were an accurate characterization the alterations must be considerable. He had once regarded Julia as beautiful—now she was handsome. The word showed him a face whose early sweetness had been exchanged for the dignity of a maturer repose. He felt that such a face would be agreeable. No doubt the qualities of her mind were similarly remoulded. To see her, he thought, would be a legitimate attention.

When he returned to his rooms, after dinner and after his wife had gone to bed, he wrote her a half-formal, half-cordial little note, and mailed it the next morning.

Her reply came promptly, written in a hand that seemed to have taken on some of the new firmness with which his imagination invested her character. He was invited to call.

II

WHEN the appointed day came he found certain difficulties in the way of keeping the engagement. His wife's health had taken a serious turn for the worse. She was confined to her bed, and when he remarked that he was going out she objected, telling him that no one was coming to see her that afternoon and that she would be lonesome.

Her desire for his company was no more than a momentary whim, and therefore he did not exaggerate its call upon his duty. At the same time, in the face of her request, he found it a little difficult to go without making an adequate excuse, which was not possible.

He shrank from telling her about

Julia, feeling that she might misconstrue his interest. So he departed at last without making an explanation and his wife followed him with reproachful eyes as he left her side.

Her reproachful air, however unreasonable, left its shadow upon his spirits. Riding in a taxi to Julia's home, he began to wonder why he was going there and he endeavoured to analyze the impulse that had resulted in penning the note to her. It now appeared foolish, unnecessary, and the prospect of meeting her a bit unpleasant, for his old emotions were only memories and he had no thought of reviving them.

But it was too late to retreat from the consequences of his letter-writing impulse. The cab drew up at her home and he mounted the unfamiliar steps and rang the bell.

A maid admitted him, took his card and led him to the reception-room. He sat down and waited. There was nothing here to remind him of Julia.

He came to her now in a different house and under more expansive conditions of living. The room, furnished with a certain heaviness of large oak chairs and a stolid old table, did not interest him. He stared at the pictures on the four walls, mostly formal landscapes, apparently the work of one man, but his eyes scarcely recorded any of their correct details.

Then Julia came in. He stood up and they faced each other.

Her lips were reposeful; she was not smiling. Her eyes, still the remembered half gray and green, with their curious suggestion of chatoyance, met his own speculatively.

She had never been strictly slender and her figure was fuller now, but still not without its grace of curves. The change in her physical self was less than those images he had made of her in his imagination.

He had been prepared for a formal greeting, and she disconcerted him with her opening words taking them both back to the circumstances of their old parting.

"You've been a long time returning

to me, George," she said. "When we quarrelled that night I didn't imagine ten years would pass until you came back."

The quality of this greeting was so unexpected and its intention so obscure that Kennell was unable to reply directly.

He stepped forward, holding out his hand, and took her own for a moment.

"How are you, Julia?" he asked. "Only the unexpected brings me here. I never believed I would return to the United States again."

She motioned him to a chair, which he occupied after she herself was seated.

"I heard you were here before your letter came," she said. "I wondered whether you would let me see you. I wanted to. . . ."

"Did you, Julia? I'm glad of that, because, coming here today, I found myself very doubtful. I couldn't think of a good reason to explain my visit, that is, to explain it to you. As for myself, I've been trying to discover some of the colour of my old life in this city—but it has been hard. Too many changes, in things . . . and myself."

He paused, and raised his eyes to her face.

She half met his gaze and half looked beyond him, as if into the scarcely distinguishable figures of the past.

For several moments she was silent.

He watched her without embarrassment and with a touch of wonder, for the old memories of his former emotions in her presence came up into his mind like chromatic pictures from a forgotten, well-loved book, and it astonished him a little to recognize the past, indubitable reality of these feelings. So it was curious to sit near her now in such a quietude of the senses.

"I was a little apprehensive about this meeting," she murmured, finally.

"Why, Julia?"

"Well, I can't quite explain, I don't know entirely myself. For one thing, I was afraid it might be hard to talk with you; I was unable to see how we *could* talk without making some reference to other times."

"And why shouldn't we?" he asked, denying his former expectation and intention. "If I haven't been able to recover entirely the spirit of my old life, at least it's been possible for me to discover a recollection of its atmosphere here and there. I ought to be able to feel more like my old self here with you than in any other place, or with any other person."

She nodded, as if in complete comprehension. Now Kennell was moved a little by the touch of reposeful reminiscence in her manner; by her quiet sincerity she evoked some of the reality that had been only the memory of her charm which no conscious striving on her part could have effected. He found himself glad to be with her, glad he had come.

"Of course I've thought of you a great deal in these years," she was saying. "And I found this a strange thing—but as time went on you became more real to me than in the days when we were actually together."

He looked at her with the raised brows of question and surprise.

"I don't mean that you weren't real then, but I think you were sometimes too vehement to be wholly convincing. Occasionally you used to frighten me and leave me with doubts—you declared so much to me and with such earnestness. Well, time has made me forget some of your words and some of our hours and remember others. The memories became fixed, crystallized, I might say, and so you grew out more definitely. The past two or three years I've seen you very plainly and known you better, I think, than I knew you ten years ago."

Her murmured and somewhat hesitating confidence touched Kennell's vanity, for it was pleasing to be so frequently and well remembered, and a new experience; others had easily forgotten him.

For the first time since thoughts of Julia had become a part of those feelings associated with his homecoming, the emotion of regret stirred in him as a new and significant figure. She, too,

was real, more real to him than any other woman of his knowledge. No events of his life, he suddenly perceived, had given him more the intensity of reality than those of her association. As from necessity he questioned her now.

"Do you find me changed?" he asked.

She shook her head slowly.

"I don't know," she said. "It's too soon for me to see you as another person, if you've really altered into a different one. As you sit there I can only see you as you were."

Her words startled him, as if the very quietness of their utterance accentuated the profundity of their significance.

"Then," he answered slowly, "you are able to get the better of time. It is almost as if the years were days—and I had just come back as you expected me to, as I wanted to. . . ."

She did not answer in words, but seated as before, in a repose that gave assurance to the mood she had evoked in both, answered with a slow, assenting nod.

He was unable to resist the urge to response, and he did not pause to consider that subtle progress by which his emotions in her presence had emerged out of their long nirvana into shapes that simulated his old ardour. Even the physical changes seen in her face and form when she had come through the door and greeted him first now vanished and left her as the old desired self. He looked into the greens of her eyes and the one-time thrill of their depths was renewed in his recrudescant senses.

An experience like that of living again astonished and enchanted his mind as the obscure recollections of old emotions leapt up into his senses as realities. He did not hesitate to reach out and take her hands, and found no surprise, but only a delight, in her yielding. The wanting of her lips obsessed him with all the urgency of former years. He drew her close to him, and put his arms about her and kissed her.

For a moment after he had released her from this embrace she sat with her

eyes half closed, as if under the spell of her reawakened senses.

Then, raising her head swiftly, she looked at his face with a startled glance.

In the impetuosity of his feelings he ignored any significance in her gaze; he had found speech a necessity, a quick assurance of their future a requirement for words.

"As you must have heard, dear Julia," he said, "I came back from the East to bring my wife home. I felt a duty toward her and I still feel it. I have never loved her; that's an emotion to which I've been dead until now, when the old time has come back again. The doctor in the East told me she might live six months and the doctors here have given her less time. I know you're able to understand my sense of duty and won't ask the impossible from me. I can't leave her; I must see it through with her. And then—"

He paused as she stood up suddenly, looking down at him with a gaze still startled and into which had come also the elements of an enigmatic surprise. She put out her hand in a restraining gesture.

"Don't tell me any more now," she whispered. "Please go now, dear, and let us talk about all this when you come again. I feel confused, I want to be alone and think. I can't even explain my curious feelings now; you must wait until next time."

He was a little disconcerted at the abruptness of his dismissal, yet, in a way, it seemed natural and was not unpleasant. There was a dramatic fitness in leaving her now, before the first moments of renewed ardour could decline into anything less poignant. He took her in his arms again, kissed her lips, that were now quiescent to his pressure, and left her with a soft good-bye.

III

WHEN Kennell returned now to the apartment which he occupied with his wife he found her suffering from a sudden and alarming relapse. His mind came back to her needs and existence by

a process of abrupt transposition. During his return from the hour with Julia she had scarcely been in his mind. His thoughts had been mainly those of a complex wonder, wonder, in part, at his fatuous conviction that he was impotent to emotion, and wonder in a more general way upon the incalculable turns of life.

He found his wife lying very still upon the bed, her face like a death mask. The doctor was still present; their maid was acting as nurse.

Kennell learned that she had suffered a hemorrhage and that for a period they had feared her death before his return.

"I don't know whether she'll pull through this or not," the doctor told him privately. "One can never calculate the exact course of phthisis. Some of the victims, as you know, put up an astonishing battle. But I can't give you a great deal of hope."

Kennell listened without definite emotion; if anything, he was surprised at his lack of emotion.

After a few moments in the sick-room the customary indifference of his feelings had come back to him as if their lethargic course had never been turned aside by the recent flood of his ardour. The hour with Julia that had loomed up at last as the only reality in a decade of shadows was now itself a shadow and this room, his pallid, half-unconscious wife, the maid, the doctor, the aromatic odour of disinfectants, were the only veritable figures and conditions of his existence. A faint, puzzled frown lined his forehead as he listened to the physician explaining her chances.

Later, alone with her in the room, he sat down at the bedside to be near for the attending of any need. Apparently she was sleeping or comatose. He was surprised after a moment to find her with opened eyes looking up into his face. Her gaze was intelligent, unfilmed with any stuporous depression.

"I'm glad you're here," she murmured.

Her words touched him a little; he pressed her hand.

"I want you to do something for me," she said.

"Certainly. What is it?"

"Go into the next room and look in my trunk. You will have to lift out the upper tray. Then you'll find a square package done up in thick paper. Please bring it to me."

He arose mechanically, glad to leave her for an instant. Her pale face, her brown eyes, more melancholy in her illness, affected him unpleasantly. In an irrational way he felt ashamed; after all, he had cheated her. He had never given her a single moment of her romantic expectancy.

He found the package in her trunk; it seemed to be an old one, preserved for a long period. The heavy string with which it was tied was worn in places as if the contents had been opened and refastened many times.

He returned to the bedside.

"Do you want me to unfasten this for you?" he asked. "What is it—a bundle of letters?"

She nodded.

"Yes," she added in words. "You can untie it presently. I believe the time has come when I should give them back to you. Years ago, when I discovered them, I hadn't the courage to give them to you nor to destroy them. They—they showed me the foolishness of my hopes."

Her words startled Kennell out of his indifference; as she finished he stared from her to the package of letters, apprehensively.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

She did not reply, and he pulled at the knot that bound the package. It yielded after a moment; he unfolded the thick paper wrapping and found the letters within.

They were a collection of Julia's letters to him, written before his marriage. He had forgotten their existence. Now he recalled, in dim gropings, their loss. They had disappeared a few months after he had married the woman at his side.

He looked down at her with a startled gaze. She still met his eyes.

"Forgive me for keeping them so long," she said slowly. "I discovered them by accident and then knew how much you had been able to love someone else and make her love you. Then I understand why you would never have any love left for me. You had . . . given everything before . . ."

Kennell was still wordless, finding all speech without fitness for the astonishing necessities of these moments. But a genuine pity gathered into his eyes as he looked down at his wife, whose own eyes were now closed. His pity was almost impersonal, it not only embraced her but himself.

How impotent they had been to effect the fulfillment of their separate hopes! The essential triviality of those hopes did not matter. It seemed to him that an implacable irony, somehow vaguely personified, had cast them together into the intimacy of their long association that each might be the instrument of the other's disillusion.

He was about to speak, but observed that his wife was breathing quietly and he believed she had fallen then into an exhausted sleep.

From this, as it happened, she did not awaken. Her quiet breathing continued until nearly morning, when it ceased entirely.

IV

Two weeks later, in response to an inquiring letter, Kennell went to see Julia. His wife was dead; his old obligation was at an end, but now a new one had arisen. In a large measure he had refused to consider it. What were his feelings for Julia? What did she expect, what expectancy had he given her?

His mind, through some fundamental shrinking, had avoided the complex consideration that was necessary for evolving answers to these questions.

He went to see her, not, this time, with the old dullness and absence of definite emotion, the almost Oriental nirvana of the senses, from which her presence had given him a moment's emer-

gence, but with a puzzled and uncertain heart.

He remembered his recent response in her nearness, and was a little surprised, although he was not sure that the second meeting would fail to arouse him in the same way.

In these perplexities of mind he was admitted once more to the house and waited for her again in the drawing-room. She came in presently and before their hands touched she spoke to him.

"Perhaps I sent for you before you were ready to come. I read of the death."

He shook his head.

"I intended to come," he said. "There were things I had to attend to, naturally. Everything is over now. I am free."

She approached him slowly, looking at him steadily, her lips unsmiling and curved with a subtle expression of reminiscent melancholy.

She held out her hands and he took them and they faced each other.

"I've been thinking of nothing but you and me since you were here last," she said. "I've thought about the old days and the present, and our . . . our adventure a few weeks ago."

She paused, as if confronting a difficult confession.

He found her face so obviously affectionate that a sudden fear aroused him to his necessity. His doubts were clarified like a turbid fluid into which is dropped a required solvent. He knew that he must not let her go on, compromise herself in spoken confession, reveal renascent dreams, for now he saw that he could not respond to them.

He cherished his memories of her, when he had been another man, for they were the things of his intimate history, the legends of another personality. Meanwhile, life had achieved in him a metempsychosis, and the old capacities for arduous illusions were gone. Julia, the woman before him, he admired for the sake of the old emotions, she had granted him these, and he en-

joyed the recollections of them; this had been her rôle in his experiences and now she was no longer real.

He pressed her hands urgently, speaking rapidly.

"So have I," he said. "I've thought of all these things. It must have been something of our old selves that came back to us a few weeks ago and made us kiss as we did. I haven't been sorry for it, because it has made my recollections clearer. I have no reason to want to forget our former time together. Meanwhile, having seen you again, Julia, and had an intimate moment with you, I understand with perfect clearness how all my life here has passed away from me. In a few weeks I am leaving America to go back to my realities. Here I feel like a shadow; I have no place."

He was surprised to see that she was smiling; he had feared a different reception of his confession. She nodded her head, the touch of melancholy left her face, she seemed glad.

"I found that out myself when you kissed me," she said. "I was afraid to tell you then."

He understood; the recollection of her face expressing an enigmatic surprise, even a touch of consternation, came back to him—her expression as he had left her that afternoon a few weeks before. He felt grateful to her and full

of a happy content, like a sick mind that has at last laid an old ghost.

Then again the appeal of her nearness possessed him and with an impulsive embrace he drew her close to him and kissed her.

"Dear, I'm going," he said, "and this is good-bye. I sha'n't forget anything of you, even this last kiss. Once I was able to make love to you and believe in my emotions with all the fervour of an artist creating a beautiful thing. Now it's a lost art. Do you understand? I am glad we were not deceived by our memories. Even now they seem so real as I hold you in my arms that if I could believe again that such a moment as this could last out the present hour, I'd never, never leave you!"

He released her from his embrace, breathed a good-bye, and turned then and walked out of the room and the house. On the street he walked briskly, like a man whose uncertainties have vanished forever. He was content and glad that he recognized the definite end of ardent necessities. After all, this discovery was the great achievement of his homecoming.

Julia, left behind in her home, fought for a time with an impulse to run to the door and call him back. She vanquished this at last, and then she cried a little, and finally went up to her room, and thought regretfully of other days.



A WOMAN is never content to know that a man loves her. What she wants to be sure of is that loving her affects him like a broken leg, or cholera morbus, or tight shoes.



WHEN he is twenty, pretend to admire his looks. When he is thirty, pretend to admire his mind. When he is forty, feed him.

Red Roses

By Leonora Speyer

I

RICHARD DONOUGHMORE felt the change in Lady Helen as soon as he saw her much loved face.

There was a radiance in it, as of a high, white light within, and it seemed to stream toward him, blinding him with its beauty, filling him with a sudden, wild hope.

He stood by the door and she, in the middle of the room; and neither spoke for a moment.

Then she held out her hands and he caught them close.

"Hello, Dick," was all she said, but her eyes were like two stars and her voice sweeter than he had ever heard it.

"Hello, my lady." He tried to speak as lightly as she. "I got your mesage just as I was leaving the House. Thank goodness they found me on the Terrace." He looked at her with a certain significance. "I was glad to hear from you, Helen."

She went swiftly to the point. "Oh, Dick, I was beastly to you the other day! I know I was! And I've been miserable ever since."

The stars grew dim.

"That's all right. Bless you." His words were laconic, but she understood. "You're very beautiful to-day, my dear. What's happened? I can see something has."

They were still standing, he was still holding her hands.

She laughed a little, tremulous laugh. "Nothing has happened—really, I mean I'm just happy."

The radiance streamed toward him again.

"Are you going to propose to me to-day?" she asked.

"I didn't think I would," he answered calmly, "I made rather a botch of it last time, didn't I?"

Her hands quivered in his, in spite of her arch words.

"Did you, Dicky? Perhaps that was—my fault."

She swayed toward him, and suddenly Richard Donoughmore's arms were round her.

"Helen—"

"Don't speak!" she said. "No, you mustn't kiss me—yet!"

She laid her cheek against his face. "Just let me stay like this—for a long, long time. I love you, Dick."

And then their lips met.

At last he spoke. "Is it true? Is it, *is it?* Oh, my dear, I only half believe it!" He put his hands on her shoulders and held her away from him. "I've loved you for six years; ever since I first met you. How you've puzzled me, how you've tortured me, Helen! Helen of Troy!"

She looked at him with wide-stretched, shining eyes.

"I will make up for it," she whispered. "Let me make up for it," and laid her head on his breast.

"What has happened?" he asked again. "Why are you so divinely sweet? You were cruel enough the other night. I wanted to shoot myself. And now—to find you like this!" He caught her to him almost roughly. "If you change again! If you change, Helen!"

Her body trembled against his.

"Trust me," she said. "I shall not change, foolish one."

He held her closer, he spoke almost desperately.

"Kiss me! Tell me you love me."

"I adore you! And I want you to be happy, my own Dick! Happy—and very good to me, please."

Some thought passed like a cloud across the shining calm of her face and just an echo of the old insouciance, the thing that made people who did not know her well, call her flippant, crept into her voice.

"Sit down. I want to talk to you."

She lit a cigarette and pushed the box toward him.

"Would you mind ringing for tea? Thank you, Dicky dear. It's a little early, I know, but I've got a lot to say. Muffins are essential. And we won't be interrupted, once tea comes. Tea, Partridge," she added, looking up as that important member of the household answered the bell, "and not at home to anyone."

Richard Donoughmore was well acquainted with Lady Helen's lightning change of mood. They sat *sidé* by side, smoking silently, he waiting for her to speak, her hand in his, she, deep in her shadowy reflections.

"Jack Harrington's back," she said finally, in short, matter-of-fact tones.

He looked straight ahead of him and blew the smoke of his cigarette into the air.

"I know. Saw it in the *Times* this morning."

"I thought you would. Well—what of it?" She turned to him and her voice grew strangely triumphant. "What of it, Dick? *Nothing of it!* That's 'what happened.' Jack's back in London—and I don't care! It means nothing to me, nothing at all," she repeated.

"Why should it?" he answered stolidly and put out the glowing end of his cigarette-stump with great care.

She looked at him with big, tender eyes.

"You're a dear. But you know what I mean all the same. You know perfectly well how tongues wagged about Jack and me!"

"They never wagged in my hearing,"

said Richard Donoughmore grimly.

He held her hand against his face. "I only hear what you want to tell me." And he kissed the palm softly.

"That's like you, too," she answered "You *are* the greatest darling!" and grew conventional as the reserved tinkle of the tea-tray sounded on the landing outside.

"You see, Jack had to marry Mabel Carslake," she began abruptly and poured boiling water into the old green and gold teapot. "They'd been—fond of each other, years before. He was a good deal younger than she—Jack was a good deal younger than most people, for the matter of that—and she stuck to him like a leech. Called it devoting her life to him. How she hated me! I'll never forget her coming to see me the month after Carslake died. And the things she told me."

Lady Helen sipped her tea reflectively. "It wasn't pleasant. I believe she was good-looking once. Jack would have been a cad; he *had* to marry her, of course, if she held him to it. Have some cake?"

"Must you tell me all this? I'm not in the least interested. I want to talk about you and me," he pleaded.

She looked at him kindly but nodded with great firmness.

"I'm sorry, but I must. And what's more, you must listen, dear boy."

He groaned. "All right. Cut it as short as you can, that's all. And please don't offer me any cake. I'm not hungry."

Lady Helen put another piece of sugar into his tea.

"Dear Dick! And so they married—and lived unhappily forever after, as the fairy stories do *not* say." She put down her cup. "Six months after that, Henry succeeded in drinking himself to death."

"That's when I met you, Helen," he interrupted and kissed her hand again. "How lovely you were in those black veils."

"The black meant nothing but that all the misery was over. I'd had a dreadful time the last two years of poor old

Henry's life; I think I'd have gone mad if it had lasted much longer. And then—Jack came back to me."

Richard Donoughmore got up and stood by the open window. The old Square looked cool and green and behind its iron railings nurses in immaculate white were pushing babies' perambulators along the well-kept gravel-paths.

Her voice went on evenly.

"I met him one day in the Park. He looked perfectly ghastly. She was making his life a hell, I could see that. We talked under the trees for a long time and then went to Kensington Gardens and had tea and some particularly nasty strawberries and cream."

Lady Helen paused for a moment but the tall figure by the window gave no sign of answering.

"I want you to know all about it," she continued, a little wistfully. "Even about the strawberries and cream, Dicky," and rose from the sofa and stood beside him.

Two fat little girls with big blue sashes, were busily digging up the gravel-paths in the Square, with wooden spades.

"They're not allowed to do that," she said, "bless them."

He turned and caught her in his arms.

"Why do you want me to know about it?" he cried. "Nothing matters but that you and I love each other!"

"I know," she said. "Nothing matters but that—and one other thing. The peace of knowing that that *other* love is dead! Oh, Dick, that is why I have been so 'cruel,' as you call it. I didn't trust myself. I kept wondering what might happen, what I might do, if—Jack came back."

"My poor Helen, was it as bad as that?" And he held her to him.

Her lips trembled and then grew very firm.

"Yes, it was as bad as that. Just as bad as that. Every time we parted—and oh, we parted so many times—I thought that it was over—I hoped that it was over. And then he would come back—and I would be glad! He wanted

me to run away with him. I almost did, twice, but thank God something happened to prevent it both times. I had pneumonia once—you remember?—and the other time," she smiled a dubious little smile, the challenging insouciance just peeped out, "I believe we quarreled about where we should run! He was always mad about India; and I felt I should loathe India, even with Jack."

Richard Donoughmore winced a little and she saw it.

Suddenly she began to weep and tried to free herself from his arms, but they were strong about her.

"Let me go—please—please—"

"Never," he answered, "never again, my darling!"

"I want you to understand," she sobbed. "It all sounds so silly. So—squalid, almost. And it *wasn't*! It was tremendously real, it was beautiful so much of the time. It wasn't a happy love, God knows, but I wouldn't have lost any minute of it! I want you to know this, even if I lose you, I want you to know everything about it, Dick."

He kissed her wild, wet eyes. "Don't cry. I do understand. And you can't lose me, Helen."

"He would send me red roses; and I would know he was coming back. Sometimes they wouldn't come for weeks—and I died a thousand deaths. Sometimes they were there an hour after we had agreed not to see each other any more! And I didn't want them, I hated them! It didn't seem to make any difference, we always found each other again. And we would be happy for a little while."

She took his handkerchief out of his pocket.

"I don't know where mine is," she said forlornly, and went on. "Of course people were talking a lot. *She* saw to that! And he kept begging me to go away with him. I don't know why I didn't. He said I didn't trust him. Perhaps that was the reason. Perhaps it was myself I didn't trust."

They sat together, hand in hand. And her voice was infinitely weary when she spoke again.

"There isn't much more to tell. The end was inevitable, and rather sudden. Mabel tried to—cut me; succeeded, in fact. And at Ascot, of all places! I wanted Jack to make her apologize—people had noticed it, you see. And he wanted me to go away with him, which wasn't the same thing, was it? I decided over night to go yachting with the Arlingtons, dull old dears. Japan—China—we were gone a year, a whole year. Jack understood. He never wrote, he never tried to see me, although once we were in Gibraltar within two days of each other. He got something to do in India, you know. I was very sad for a long time, but I was at peace. And I'm sure Jack felt the same. He must have." Again the silence between them. "I never even wrote to him when Mabel died. It seemed so hypocritical to write about his 'sad loss' when I knew how miserable she'd made him! So I left it—and I'm glad I did. Jack and I were always honest with each other, it would have been the one lie between us."

She drew a deep breath. "It's all over. And I love you—if you still want me to."

He knelt at her feet and put his face against her knees.

"Please God you will know peace with me. Will you marry me, Helen?" said Richard Donoughmore.

II

WHEN she came back into the room, for she had left him for a little while, she found him standing by the open window.

A detestable old woman, trying to look like Queen Victoria, had stopped the children from digging up the path, he told her; he was angry about it, he wanted to go down and tell the old beast what he thought of her, he wanted to do all sorts of violent things.

"Muriel Bridges has had her second group of twins," said Lady Helen, leaning happily against him. "Both girls, too. I hear she's furious. Pity she can't just keep the nicest, like kittens." And they laughed together.

"By the way, that came while you were upstairs," and he nodded in the direction of a long, white box that lay across a stool near the door.

"Somebody has sent me flowers. I wonder who."

She held the box on her lap, unpicking the knot with deft, unhurried fingers.

"It's unlucky to cut a knot," she said. "I never do." And lifted the lid.

There, close and dewy and crimson, lay long-stemmed roses, packed tightly together.

The heavy perfume stole up into her face, smote her like soft, over-scented hands.

He turned at her cry and stood beside her, looking into the open box.

"R-r-roses," she stammered.

She sat staring up at him.

Rather clumsily she got upon her feet and the roses spilled about her.

"Dick!" She made a little movement toward him as if for protection against a sudden danger and he saw how pale she was.

"What of it?" He tried to speak naturally but his voice shook.

She did not answer. She stood there, staring, staring.

"Why do you look like that?" he cried. "Good God, Helen, do you *care*? Do those flowers mean anything to you—now?"

Lady Helen started violently, like someone wakened by a sudden noise.

"No, no," she answered almost shrilly. "They—they startled me, that's all." And she laughed, a little, high, misleading laugh that turned him sick. "They positively made me jump."

He stooped and picked up the roses, moved swiftly toward the window with them; but she flung herself upon him, snatched at them, tore them from his hands.

Neither felt the deep-digging thorns though their fingers bled.

"What were you going to do?" she asked and her face blazed with a fierce anger. "Were you going to throw them away? My roses? Were you?"

"I wanted to see what you'd do," he

answered. "I wasn't sure." Their eyes met like strong swords, crossed; and hers fell first.

She hid her face in the great buds and he heard her whispering among the petals.

"He shouldn't have done this; he shouldn't, he shouldn't!" And she spoke a name. "Jack," she said. And again, "Oh, Jack—"

Richard Donoughmore turned abruptly toward the door, but she ran after him, her roses close to her breast.

"I'm sorry. Forgive me, Dick! Please don't leave me like this! It isn't my fault, is it?" And her face became transfigured. "I thought he'd forgotten. I thought I'd forgotten."

"How about me? You seem to have forgotten all about me, Helen."

He stood by the door, just as he had stood two short hours before; and the bliss of those hours swept over him. With outstretched, urging hands he moved toward her.

"For God's sake, throw those damned things away! They're not *real*! Think what you've been telling me, what you've promised me! Look at me, Helen."

He tried to put his arms around her but she shrank from him.

"I'm sorry. I'm terribly sorry."

She stood there, holding her roses, she was like someone waiting in a hush of expectancy, leaning toward a coming sound, listening—

But not to him.

And he realized as he looked at her that he could not make her listen, nor hear, no matter what he said; and a slow anger began to stir in his heart, against her and against those flaunting flowers. Their odor crawled, snake-like, across her bosom to him and something of their red light seemed to have crept into her face, changing it utterly, devastating its white beauty.

"I'm sorry," she said again, dully, almost mechanically.

He threw up his hands with a gesture of despair.

"Sorry!" I suppose I must be satisfied with that." And he straightened

his shoulders as if taking an unseen weight upon his back.

"All right," he said. "But I don't think I'll forgive you, Helen."

Fate assumes strange guises at times. To all appearances it was Partridge who entered as Robert Donoughmore's fingers sought the knob of the door, to all evidence of ear it was Partridge's smooth tones.

Fate spoke. "Beg pardon, milady, but there's a mistake about the flowers. Hit appears they're for hopposite; Lady Bridges, milady."

And then all Richard Donoughmore's anger left him, all his love for her and all his loyal devotion, rose up in a wave of passionate admiration.

She was magnificent as she put the roses back into the box. Her face was pleasantly expressionless, her voice had a dignified little drawl in it.

"I thought there must be a mistake," she said and put on the lid of the box. "There was no card. I—I was looking for one."

She did not lift her eyes to Donoughmore as Fate—or was it Partridge after all?—bore off the roses and closed the door. There was a silence in the room and somewhere nearby a clock was ticking its strenuous course.

Suddenly she laughed out loud and went over to where he stood. "'And mistress of herself though China fall!'" she quoted. "Confess it's useful to have been taught early in life by an old rip of a grandmother, how to behave before the servants. One up to the Duchess of Merford, Dick!"

Again the laugh but it rang less true.

"I've been a pretty fool, haven't I?" she said.

He caught hold of her hands.

"Well done, you brave, dear woman."

But at his words, her proud banners faltered, her towering ramparts fell with a crash; and she, among the ruins.

He knelt by her as she crumpled up on the big sofa, she let him hold her, she lay like something broken on his breast; and between the sobs that

racked her, she kept saying, over and over, "What a fool—what a fool—!"

But she clung to him again and that was all that mattered to Richard Donoughmore. She clung to him, she needed him.

"What a fool I've been. Oh Dick—Dick—!"

Her wet face was pressed against his, her tears were salt, delicious, on his mouth; only her lips she kept resolutely turned away.

The storm passed. He sat beside her as she lay against the cushions, eyes closed, her hot hand tight in his.

"You will forgive me, won't you?"

"Forgive you, Helen! I'm glad, I'm thankful to God, it all happened. I understand everything now, I only love you now!"

"How dear you are," she said gratefully. "Big, best friend."

"More than that," he answered, a little hoarsely. "So much more than that, beloved." And his lips sought hers.

But she hid them from him.

"Don't—" she said.

"Kiss me, Helen."

She shook her head and then put her face close to his. "I can't. Please don't ask me."

"Why, little one?" He spoke as to a child but in his heart was a dread of her answer.

"I can't—ever again. I mustn't. Not now. Not after all that has happened."

"All that has happened? What has happened, except that we are nearer to each other than we ever were?"

She looked at him with a great sadness and a great knowledge, in her eyes.

"You don't understand." And the sadness deepened, seemed to float like a mist between them.

"I can never marry you now, Dick."

There was a terrible finality in her words, but he would not listen.

"That's nonsense. Oh, my dear, don't say it! *Nothing* has happened! Think what you were like, think how happy we were before those cursed

roses came! Forget them, Helen! Of course you're going to marry me."

The mist rolled round them.

"What if they did come? What then? Have you thought of that?"

He held her to him, he kissed her eyes and her hair. He forced her lips toward his.

"I love you! I'm not afraid of all the roses in England!"

But she struggled away. She rose from the sofa, facing him; and in her voice was a strange, mournful exultance.

"I am!" she said. "I'll always be afraid!" And the mist hid her from him. He heard her as from a far distance and it sounded like bells tolling.

"They won't come; they'll never come, I know. But if they did—if they did—"

"And that's why we mustn't marry," said Lady Helen; and put her arms around him, kissed him gently.

"Good-bye," she whispered.

He strained her to him, he held her as though he would never let her go, knowing that she was going forever.

"You'll let me see you. You'll let me be your friend?"

She tried to smile.

"Of course. But perhaps not for a while."

He divined her thought miserably.

"You're going away, aren't you? I shall lose you entirely."

"Only for a little while," she repeated. "I—I *must* go away for a little while. I can't be in London just now."

The ghost of her old insouciance lifted its head with a gallant attempt at jauntiness.

"I'm running away," said the ghost. "I'm a coward, a limp white feather fluttering—not very gaily—in the breeze! Don't despise me, Dicky!"

"Promise you'll send for me if you want me, if you need me," he answered and dropped her hands as he spoke his last words to her. "My darling. Always, always my darling."

"I promise. Good-bye."

But he knew that she would not send for him, that she would not need him.

III

SHE heard the street-door close; she heard his steps on the pavement outside, until distance bore them away.

Against the pale gray of the carpet a spot of color flashed like a signal in the fading light. It was a rose-petal; its fragrance seemed to whisper faintly.

Partridge came in on respectfully hushed feet, to remove the tea; the trained eye fastened on the petal, the large hand stooped.

London's slow dusk crept into the room; a hansom rattled by.

"Henny extra for dinner, milady?" asked Partridge as he lifted the tea-tray from the little table.



Finalities

By Muna Lee

You are gayer than I, you are graver than I,
 You are wiser and less wise—
 Nor can all my passionate answer still
 The question of your eyes.
 I have given the substance, given the dream,
 The doubts and the truth thereof,
 I have given you all that that there is of me—
 And all is not enough.



PEOPLE wonder why men are so greatly attracted by chorus girls. They forget that the chorus girls were picked by men in the first place.



WHEN a woman condones her sister's sin, it is a sign that she is preparing her own defense in advance.



A PLATONIC love affair usually ends in the woman losing her head and the man his liberty.



WISDOM is divided into two parts: (a) having a great deal to say, and (b) not saying it.

The Direful Beard

By Milnes Levick

THERE was a man and because of his beard the dread of him spread throughout the city in which he dwelt. It was a mighty beard, blue-black in hue, spreading upon all sides and of so astounding a length that while he spoke, which was rarely, it accommodated at one time three ripples between the movement of his chin and the nether margin. He wore no neckerchief and his eyes peered from a thicket.

In all the quarters of the town the man was known by no name save that of his beard. At the mention of it

children fled and striplings trembled. He had but to waft the nearer tips with his breath and seigneurs and councillors did obeisance, and at all seasons the women pecked askance at him with delicious shiverings as in fascination they whispered to one another the tale of an earlier and bluer beard.

So did all the women save one, who showed not fear nor anything but wise and smiling contentment in his presence, and this one was his wife. For of all those in that populous city it was only she who knew that he had grown his beard to hide his dimples.



Chautauqua Week

By Leonard Hall

A PAUNCHY man in dress clothes
Is roaring at five hundred sweating Methodists •
About their souls,
Beneath the platform
Five Africans are shooting crap,
And a red-headed boy
Is filling the speaker's plug hat
With green paint.



The Saturday Night Blues

By Catharine Brody

SOME publicity agent for the anti-suffrage organization should have heard Alice Crane Barker tell Mr. Pendleton why she had married. A benign and florid face edged with white hair gave Mr. Pendleton the look of a business-like angel, which further acquaintance bore out. He liked to simulate an angelic—sometimes troublesomely angelic—interest in the affairs of his employees.

Certain eyebrow-raising details had reached him regarding the hasty marriage of Alice Crane Barker. Gus Barker, it appeared, was one of those people who are predestined to go through life on the charge-and-dun plan, and, as no one who had had five minutes' acquaintance with Alice Crane Barker would have suspected her of marrying for love, it was natural that Mr. Pendleton should bluntly hunt for information, much as a doctor hunts for the fallible part of one's back, by administering a series of conversational punches.

"I'll be gosh darned! What makes you women marry for, anyway?" In this way he received Alice Crane's intimation that there was no danger of a collision between her job and her marriage. "If your husband couldn't provide for you, whaddye get married for?"

"For protection," returned Alice Crane equably.

Fortunately the spectacle of Alice Crane Barker, who on occasion presented to the world a surface as smooth and hard and unimpressible as that of a polished agate, needing protection, moved Mr. Pendleton to give vent to a series of crescendo chuckles. Then his

eye lighted on the first letter of the morning's mail and he straightway forgot all about his self-sufficient secretary.

Alice Crane went on looking through the cabinet under "A" for the folder of Acorn & Co., who had just complained of their last shipment.

She moved shapely, square hands, unornamented except for a wedding ring, among the contents of the drawer. Her square, healthy, pale face, with the frank blue eyes and the firm mouth, her flat bright hair, the high-collared crêpe de chine shirtwaist, the assured swing of her hips and the erect carriage of her head—all implied some sly sarcasm lurking in the avowal of her need of a protector, like a pin mischievously hidden in the chair of a schoolmaster.

She had said "protection" on the spur of the moment. It was inadequate to express the mingled considerations which prompted Alice Crane to consent to become Alice Crane Barker. She never hastily o. k.'d a letter for filing or hurriedly ironed a handkerchief, but she married Gus Barker in the wink of an eyelash, on the Monday after the Friday night that she had, after due reflection, decided to cast him out of her mind forever. Saturday made the difference.

Alice Crane lived in one of those out-at-heels brownstone houses which hold their comfortable own among the upstart ten-story white bricks in Central Park West. Gus Parker met her at the door one Friday night. Gus wore clothes impeccably, had a straight profile of which an amber pipe seemed to be an inseparable part, and cropped his hair very close. He affected the athletic

type as much as a shipping clerk can.

"I've got another raise," announced Alice Crane, after the preliminary "Hellos."

Gus took his pipe out of his mouth and looked sour. He carried definite news from his old man to the effect that Gus wasn't worth another penny to the firm and wouldn't get one, by gad!

"You women get away with it all right," he said bitterly. "Like the fellow said in the paper, all a girl needs is taking eyes and a giving mouth to get ahead."

He stuck his pipe back in the corner of his mouth.

When a girl has been engaged to a man for an indefinite period and sees every prospect of continuing engaged for a still more indefinite period, the sting of the hornet is more likely to be among her accoutrements than the love-shafts of Cupid.

"Why don't you go into the advice on how to get ahead in business!" sneered Alice Crane. "You've got the main requirement to make a fortune that way. You certainly know what not to do."

They quarreled, disdainfully on Alice Crane's part, resentfully on his.

"What in goodness would I marry you for?" spoke up Alice Crane. "We're not kids of sixteen to be head over heels in love. I can support myself twice as well as you can. I can give myself a good time, everything I need and my freedom into the bargain. Is there anything a man like you can offer a girl like me?"

If the question had been put to a country-store-outfitted Gus at the back door of a farmhouse, he would have scratched his head and gaped. These primordial expressions being taboo in the city, Gus removed his pipe once more and glared.

"I've heard that before," he pronounced, outraged. "Think you got everything, don't you? Just the same, there'll be a time when you'll give everything just to have a man! I know you women."

The baleful glare of Alice Crane struck and blighted him as the glare of

the hot sun withers a violet. His jaw, upon which long years of following-the-leader in work, dress, food and thought had left its mark, the prettified shoulders of the office worker, the narrow waist of the dandy, the surprise-proof eyes of the New Yorker—her glance meaningly swept and obliterated them all.

She stopped at the last button of her gloves, opened the front door and glanced over her shoulder.

"When that time comes, we'll meet again," she snapped.

She slammed the door. It was her adieu, farewell, the "we part forever" of grand opera.

II

No one who knew Alice Crane would be so far misled as to suppose that she wept half the night over what looked like a separation even more interminable than the long engagement. She never even thought of shedding a quiet tear or two in a corner of her immaculate handkerchief, and the idea of dropping them on her pillow would have been distasteful in the extreme. Alice Crane was a scrupulously neat person.

On Saturday morning, however, her smooth bearing was a trifle ruffled. She grumbled at the telephone operator; she grimaced impatiently over Mr. Pendleton's innumerable fussinesses; she wondered audibly with the bookkeeper over the sheerness of the stenographer's georgette waist. In short, Alice Crane was not herself.

At one o'clock she collected her salary, rolled down the top of Mr. Pendleton's desk, slammed her own, dabbed her nose reflectively with a powder-puff before a pocket mirror, jammed on her hat, buttoned her coat briskly, caught the down-going elevator at a run and a shuffle, and stood poised at the head of the stairs in front of the building.

She generally met Gus on Saturday afternoons and had a lingering luncheon with him—latterly she had considered paying her share of the bill. They parted at the door of the restaurant, he

to disappear into mysterious masculine haunts with the boys, she to shop or freshen up her dress and her disposition for the evening.

Saturday nights they went to the theater, varying it slightly with vaudeville shows or even motion pictures when the source of Gus's finances was as dry as the Great American Desert. When that source was profuse as a millionaire's private stock—this happened occasionally during the racing seasons—they finished with a sparing midnight supper in one of the less conspicuous cafés or partook of a before-the-show table d'hôte dinner in one of the less well-known hotels. They quarreled through it all, with sharp irony on Alice Crane's part, with flaring resentment on the part of Gus. Yet every Saturday night they went religiously through the same form, ending with final reconciliation at Alice Crane's door.

As she maintained her equilibrium at the head of the stairs in spite of the headlong rush of telegraph boys, brokers' clerks, pimple-faced youths with small eyes, square-chinned youths with hard eyes, and all the other ants that swarm over the anthill of lower Broadway, Alice Crane determined that her amusements would not be curtailed by the absence of Gus Barker. She decided against a *matinée* in favour of an evening performance of some play. There should be, according to all the laws of nature, more comfort in being alone than with a person who scrapped intolerably.

She planned to have preliminary tea at one of the big hotels in the East Forties, newly built for the growing class of people who have just acquired things—furs, jewels or exquisite women—and like to show them off. She would go alone. She was in no mood to offer excuses or explanations to any of the few girls of her acquaintance.

So Alice Crane hunted up a subterranean cut-rate ticket agency, where she ordered a first balcony seat for a promising musical comedy. She was not in the drama mood, as any self-re-

specting heroine who had just separated from her lover necessarily would be, but in the musical comedy mood, as any tired business woman after a half-day of grilling office work would be.

"Two?" mumbled the clerk.

"One," said Alice Crane.

"One?" repeated the clerk, and favoured her with a stare out of pale eyes over a debonair nose and a mustache as light as a lemon fizz.

"I said so," she returned frigidly.

"Gee, I just bumped into an iceberg," sang the clerk to his fellow. "How's the weather at your end?"

He added a fatuous wink for Alice. It was not the most opportune opening for what had been planned as a defiantly pleasant day.

At three o'clock, after lunch and some perfunctory shopping, Alice dragged exhausted feet over the heavily carpeted mezzanine floor of the big hotel.

The men who lounged there, revelling in soft armchairs and abundant cigarette trays, looked as if they had stepped out cool and calm and callous from a cellar advertisement. The women who accompanied them were of three classes: lightly rouged, moderately rouged, and expertly made up. The first were the school friends and childhood sweethearts; the second, wives; and the third, by far the larger part, were of a class that toils not nor spins nor has any visible and legal means of support, but manages to put the lilies of the field to envy notwithstanding. Alice, alone, watched them all, envying the women—envying them the quality of their skins, glossy as the coats of exquisitely kept race-horses, envying them the luxurious sheen of their clothes, the splendid appointments of their escorts.

A round-bellied little man with sharp black eyes spoke to a maid who stood and watched from a corner. The maid came and bent over Alice.

"Are you a guest of the hotel, madame?" she murmured suavely.

"Why, no, but I'm waiting here for tea," frowned Alice.

"Then I am sorry, madame, but you cannot wait here. We do not allow unescorted ladies to wait here. There is a special part of the mezzanine floor reserved for ladies."

"But I am waiting here for a friend."

"I am sorry, madame, but we do not allow unescorted ladies to wait here," repeated the maid inflexibly. The fat little man never took his sharp eyes off her.

As Alice left, her cheeks burning with the stifling heat of helpless indignation, she saw the maid bend over another girl, who raised a haughty, heavily powdered face. The girl's lips moved in explanation; the maid seemed to insist. Suddenly a man turned the corner and greeted the girl. She exclaimed her relief, while the maid backed away and apologized profusely.

"A man's a woman's card of admission anywhere," thought Alice Crane scornfully. She was too angry to think of having tea, as she went home to prepare for a carefully gay evening as recompense.

III

It was years since Alice Crane had had occasion to pay her own carfare to the theater district on a Saturday night, and elbow her own way through the peculiar Saturday night throngs, and cling to a strap alone in a car full of Saturday-nighters. The last are in a class by themselves. On week-day evenings a stray caterpillar is noticeable here and there among the butterflies—a man with a clay pipe in his mouth prepared for a dreary night of guarding other people's property or a drab woman bent to her toilsome evening of washing other people's floors. But on Saturday nights these, somehow, disappear. Saturday nights are dedicated to youth—youth rich in money because it has the fulness of the afternoon pay envelope pressing against the pocket, youth rich in time, because it has a whole day of reckless rest before it. This youth comes in pairs.

To Alice Crane it seemed as if the

whole heterogeneous universe had evolved into a small world of twos with herself as the one desolate and isolated individual. She was as aloof in the crowded subway as a hermit gazing down from his solitary mountain hut on the gregarious life of a city.

She began idly to classify the groups in the world of twos. From one subway station came the buxom and overdressed damsels of Harlem with their escorts, dark-haired and sharp-eyed, the future dress-goods manufacturers and clothing factory owners of the city. From another came slender, overgrown girls with floppy hats and matter-of-fact voices, with their escorts, blond and square, the furniture salesmen and shoe clerks of the city. And from another, carefully corseted women with costly clothes and still more costly faces and their escorts, smooth-faced, heavy-joweled, the sports, the race-track touts, the gayer fellows of the city.

The theater was even more a hedged-in world of twos. The musical comedy world especially has its twos—to every hero his heroine; to every villain his adventuress; to every chorus girl her chorus man. A girl in a net dress sat on one side of Alice Crane, exchanging futilities with her escort; a girl in a cloth dress sat on the other side, exchanging banalities with hers. And on the stage the Thespian hero and heroine mixed futilities with banalities.

Slightly to the hither part of midnight the Thespian hero gathered his heroine in his arms and, by a kiss on the most intensively rouged portion of her lips, announced that the purpose of the play had been consummated and that the audience might go home with conscience at ease. Young men ploughed a way for their petticoated halves to glide through to the nearest cabaret or perhaps ice-cream parlour, or maybe just the orangeade stand on the corner. Giggling girls moved forward in horizontal line formation. Then came Alice Crane endeavouring to preserve a guiltless air after her intrusion on the Saturday night world of twos.

For the life of her she could not help

sidling along in the glaring shade of buildings. Each yellow electric bulb was the cattish eye of a shocked grandma coldly accusing, taunting, unforgiving. She thought two men leaning against a corner building had turned to look at her in the manner of the fat, sharp-eyed hotel detective. Striding away, she passed the subway station and, rather than turn back to face them again, she walked on to Columbus Circle.

By these gradations, we come to "Sandy," for whom in the intervals of taking care of the sparrow and clothing the lily, the Lord provides free pickings either on Columbus Circle or Blackwell's Island.

It was Columbus Circle for Sandy, pickpocket de luxe, tonight, and there he stood in a conveniently darkened corner adjacent to the Subway station, with his hat pulled down low to disclose only the tip of a nose and the stub of a cigar. As if luck had not been generous enough to Sandy that day, it gradually penetrated to the slit of a brain via the slit of an eye that a woman's flat, leather purse lay at his feet. With an agile twist he leaped upon it and began to transfer it to his pocket.

Alice Crane, feeling for an intangible purse and equally intangible carfare, turned back sharply and caught the rebound of Sandy's agility.

"That's my pocketbook," said Alice Crane in mild surprise.

"Go tell it to Sweeney," advised Sandy. There wasn't a sign of a blue-coat within Sandy's line of vision.

"Hand back that purse, or I'll call a policeman."

"You better shut your trap," menaced Sandy.

A few men on their way to the station paused with the vacuous curiosity of New Yorkers. To these Alice Crane appealed.

"Call a policeman, please. He's got my purse."

But they shrugged and stared indolently. It might be so and it mightn't. Besides, it was none of their business.

"But I tell you he has my purse. I can't get home. I haven't any carfare," cried Alice Crane. "Call a policeman. Somebody please call a policeman!"

"Aw, what's your game, sister?" sneered Sandy for the benefit of those within hearing and believing distance.

In the meanwhile he edged closer to the fringe of what had become a fair-sized group. There are streets around Columbus Circle bearing the same proportion to it, in point of light, as do the country lanes to the village Main Street. They are convenient for the sudden disappearance of Sandy's kind in moments of dire need.

"You'll not get away with my pocket-book," snapped Alice decisively, and grasped Sandy's arm. He flung it aside and lunged at the crowd, which involuntarily broke. One man with a tardy sense of justice caught him.

"G'wan. Give back the lady's pocket-book."

"Whose got her pocketbook? You let me go."

Shaking the man off, as a mongrel shakes off a flea, Sandy made a dash for the security of the darkened streets. The crowd turned after him instinctively. The same instinct prompted a man with an amber pipe which seemed an indefinable part of his features to halt in his diagonal stroll across the Circle in the path of the fleeing Sandy, and to put out his hands and grab him.

"It's a lady's pocketbook he got," the forerunner of the heated crowd informed him.

"Ah, you shut up! I didn't take no pocketbook," whined Sandy.

Alice Crane came up here, her head down, her throat lumpy with exasperation.

"I dropped it and he picked it up," she gasped.

"I found it over there, and she says it's hers. How do I know it's hers? You let me go or I'll—I'll show you, you big stiff. I'll—"

"Dry up, now. Just give that pocketbook back," ordered the man, and as

Alice Crane's head went up in amazement, he nodded reassuringly: "You'll get it back in a minute, Alice."

After Sandy had handed over the purse, receiving a shaking and his release, Alice Crane found herself clinging to Gus Barker's arm in a subway train stiflingly full of paired-off couples.

"Gus," she began wildly, "did I say

you couldn't give me anything? Forget it! I'll marry you as soon as you say—Sunday, Monday, any time, if you promise one thing. I don't care about the love, honour and obey part, but you must promise to shield and protect me—from ticket sellers, hotel detectives, pickpockets, nasty looks, and the Saturday night blues—Amen."



Caution

By Dennison Varr

I USUALLY make no objection to a girl's father no matter what his occupation is; but I will have nothing to do with a girl whose father is a minister. Such a parent would fill me with fear. If we were sitting in the lounge together, I and his daughter, he might slip in stealthily and marry us before I could expostulate.



A CLEVER woman is never content; she finds her love affairs either burlesque or tragedy, and she has a taste for neither.



A REPUTATION for sagacity is made by saying what one thinks; it is kept by saying what one doesn't think.



SOME women get revenge on their husbands by eloping with other men. Others get revenge by growing double chins.



The Danube Under the Moon

By *Helen Woljeska*

The moon sees many things.
Tender, secret, throbbing things.
Feverish, plaintive, wraithlike things.
Bad and mad and foolish things . . .
Poor Moon.

* * *

IT was a white winter night.
The moon hung in the sky.
Below it Vienna glittered in luminous mists of greenish silver.

Brilliant lamps and flaming lanterns dotted the vision with gold and with red.

The moon looked in at the wide, illumined windows of an aristocratic house. It saw spacious rooms, luxurious furnishings, dazzling chandeliers, and masses of hot-house flowers—rich red roses, pale proud camelias, and hyacinths heavy with scent. And it saw many children, like larger hot-house flowers, exotic, delicate, and languid. Pompous footmen served oriental sweets on golden trays. Dark-gowned governesses sat along the walls, sallow, serious, and severe. The sensuous rhythm of Strauss waltzes floated slowly through the air.

"Look at the moon—how beautiful!"
Ludmilla stretched out her slender, bare arms. She herself had a moon-white face, with large, green, dreamful eyes, and short-cut bronze-coloured curls. She was excessively thin and fine, and wore a Parisian frock of lace, batiste and ribbons.

"Never mind the moon," drawled Alfred of the long, corn-coloured curls dangling over embroidered collar to the waist of his brown velvet suit.

"You are more beautiful," volunteered the other, elder one, proud of his Eton and white trousers.

The three had retired from the light and laughter of the room into the intimacy of the big window embrasure. Closing the heavy curtain behind them, they stood against its velvety darkness, glorified in the mysterious light of the moon. Three little, precious marionettes they seemed, playing their little comedy—for themselves more than for one another.

Ludmilla looked at her two admirers, her head thrown back, her eyes questioning.

Then she laughed.

"How silly you both are!"

She turned from them, pressed her warm white cheek against the window pane. "Go away—I want to be alone with my beautiful pale moon—"

"I will not go!" declared Alfred, heroically.

Then, resolved to save the situation with a thrill:

"Give me a kiss!" he demanded.

She shrugged her shoulders and did not vouchsafe an answer.

Zdenko, much relieved, laughed derisively.

"But she must!" Alfred caught hold of her slender wrists.

A thrill of joy trembled through Ludmilla. But, grotesquely wise, she resisted, instinctively wishing to prolong the delight of knowing herself admired and having the power to refuse. Her head bent back, her eyes sparkling, she mocked him.

Zdenko grinned approval.

It was too much for Alfred.

He struggled determinedly, without further regard for romance or dainti-

ness, and forced her easily into his arms.

This time she was genuinely angered. His lack of ceremony chilled her, spoilt the whole mood.

"Let me go!" she cried, fiercely, "let me go!"

And her small clenched fist hit him squarely in the face.

He loosened his grip.

"All right," he said sullenly, "I don't care, anyway—"

He half turned away, glaring at her over his shoulder.

The elder boy, considering the incident closed, smiled sarcastically at the two disappointed ones, then, raising the heavy curtain, disappeared in the light-flooded room.

Ludmilla's heart sank.

She felt cold all of a sudden, deserted.

"Unless you come to me of your own free will—" Alfred, on second thought, added.

There was another silence.

Motionless the two stood in the pale, fantastic light of the moon.

Ludmilla's head was bent.

With nervous fingers she crumpled her silken sash. Curious, eager, she wanted the little episode to have its exquisite climax. Still—to do what he said was impossible.

"No—I cannot!" she cried at last, decidedly.

And with a swift cat-like movement she turned, to follow Zdenko, and leave the whole spoilt affair behind.

But he seized her, very quickly.

"You cannot—?" he asked—"why can you not?"

At once she shifted her ground. "It would be—a sin!" She revelled in the word so full of sinister charm.

Alfred smiled, a man-of-the-world smile.

"You will like it!" he promised.

But she shook her head.

"It would be a sin!" she reiterated.

"Why not commit a sin?" He said it thoughtfully, almost plaintively.

She looked up, struck by this note of sincerity.

His eyes were very close to hers, and in them she thought she discerned that mingling of sorrow and love which women older than herself have sometimes been unable to resist . . . She lowered her lids. A glow spread over her cheeks. She felt the joy of the artist who realizes that his work is coming to a successful end!

Once more she glanced up, with velvety look.

"But how can I? The moon is looking . . ." she whispered mysteriously, shyly.

It was her last line of defence.

Just then the moon drew a cloud over herself . . .

Poor Moon.



WOMAN is the source from which every man draws according to his needs: the callow youth, madness; the adult, delight; the old man, reminiscence; the saint, beatitude; and the sinner, sin.



Gossip

By Frances Norville Chapman

"HAVE you seen the tapestry?" Kitty Bowers asked casually, as she handed Verrell his cup of tea.

Her manner was serene, but something in the watchful, anxious eye of the maid told him that serving afternoon tea was not an accustomed function in that household.

It amused Verrell and faintly depressed him. All of his boyhood friends seemed anxious to offer him the ceremonious hospitality to which they imagined his successful life in great cities had made him accustomed, when all he wanted was the simple little-town friendliness that for years he had carried in his heart as one of his most cherished memories.

The first shock had been to find that Baldwinsville was no longer the lazy Mississippi river town that he remembered. If it had not increased vastly in population, it had taken on all the physical aspects of a city; a union depot, street cars, taxis, paved streets, and the little wilderness of park that in his boyhood had formed a green heart in the center of the village square, had given place to a fine Town Hall with a bit of lawn carefully roped off from the chance invader. He couldn't see much difference in the dress and manners of the young people of Baldwinsville from those of the young people of, say, Cincinnati or New York; if their sophistication was a little blatant and crudely expressed, it was perhaps because in Cincinnati or New York you took things more as a matter of course, the inevitable result of urban experience.

"It's a Gobelin . . . genuine," Mrs. Bowers' voice recalled him, and the note

of, not pique, resentment nor reproach, but tintured with all three, made him hasten to reply:

"No, but I'm invited to see it tomorrow. Isn't there a private view, a tea or something for the select few?"

"Now you're laughing at us," she coloured a little. "No doubt we are making a great to-do about it, but the tapestry is really the most important addition we have made to our little gallery, which I suppose seems rather funny and countrified to you, as it's just a wing thrown out from the library. But it's a start, and anyway, we think it's more educational to have it there; that is, the children will go there and er . . . well, use it more . . . look at the pictures and tapestry more than they would if it were in a building by itself. Of course, in time, we shall have a real art gallery, but we believe in growing slowly. Surely, in twenty-two years, you find Baldwinsville changed?" she veered, and as Verrell agreed that Baldwinsville had indeed changed, he thought impatiently,

"Why are they all so sensitive and full of pretense?"

"Of course, traveling around as you have, living abroad and becoming famous," Kitty continued lightly, "our pictures may not strike you as anything very wonderful. Most of them are by modern painters or reproductions of old masters, but that tapestry is *genuine*. It is small, but the very best experts say that it is one of the finest examples of its kind," her voice was truculent.

"Can't I call for you in my car tomorrow?" she ended a little breathless and uncertain that she had not been rude to this coveted guest.

"Thanks, no, I'm dining with Steve

Pindar. You know I haven't even seen Steve yet. He's called at the hotel and I've been to his office twice, but we've missed each other. However, I got him on the telephone this morning and we've arranged to meet and go to the gallery together."

"Steve Pindar!" she made a slight *moué*. "You didn't find *him* much changed, did you? With all his brains too. I've tried to be nice to him, invite him here and all that sort of thing, but he won't come. If anything he gets more impossible every year. But I will say that if I needed a friend, I know I could depend on Steve Pindar. He could have been a rich man if he'd taken half the opportunities that have been thrust upon him. He drew the plans for the library wing, and for the Town Hall. Lots of people didn't like it at first, thought it was too plain and old-fashioned, but after Steve got a fine offer to go with a firm of architects in St. Louis, they began to realize how well it fits into the landscape and the general character of the place."

Verrell laughed softly and Kitty joined him, but became instantly defensive: "However, that's true of any place, large or small, 'a prophet in his own country,' you know. You should have heard what he said about the tapestry," and Verrell realized that this was a subject not easily exhausted. "You know that funny way he's always had, indifferent about most of the things that *we* think important, and you never know whether he is laughing at you or not, but if you *ask* him anything and he thinks you really want to know, he'll tell you, or go to any amount of trouble to find out about it. Well, when the tapestry came he, for once, was enthusiastic. He advised us about hanging it and he goes there and studies it for hours. You wonder how he knows so much about such things when he hasn't been outside Baldwinville a year, all told, in his whole life, except when he went to State University.

"You know the tapestry is ages old. never could carry dates or figures in my head, but I have it all down in my Art

Club note book. It belonged to one of the kings of France, Louis . . . the . . . I can't remember, but the one who was so *awful*, mistresses and all that sort of thing," she looked at him with brave, daring eyes, as though flaunting her emancipation from traditional prudishness. "I can't for the life of me remember this minute whether it was Pompadour, Madam de Maintenon or Anne . . . no, she was English . . . Well, anyway, the king gave the tapestry to one of his lady friends, and there was an awful row over getting it away from her.

"Steve Pindar said, in that dry way of his, that if the directors looked into the history of the tapestry, he was afraid they would send it to the basement to keep 'Huckleberry Finn' company, and then he went on with the drollest lot of nonsense you ever heard, telling what Huck would do and say to the little nymphs on the tapestry, some of it was hardly proper, but I laughed until I cried.

"You know," she went on, "I don't see anything immoral in 'Huckleberry Finn'; it is rough and coarse, and might put adventurous ideas into a boy's head, and perhaps it was just as well to take it off the shelves for general circulation although there was very little call for it. But now, when you can only get it by special application, there is such a demand for it that they've had to get extra copies," Kitty laughed wickedly.

"You know I really am rather awful myself. I'm not a bit immoral but I certainly am *unmoral*," she smiled consciously, and Verrell recognized the catch phrase he had heard on the lips of no less than a dozen young or youngish women within the past week. Their emancipation was a little too obvious to be sincere, and he looked at Kitty Bowers curiously. She had been a distractingly pretty girl and at middle age she was still pretty, with all the promise of her youthful prettiness unfulfilled; nothing had been added, nothing remained but the well-preserved remnant of her youth.

"It seems to have a scandalous history,

even for a tapestry," Verrell joked.

"Aren't you afraid that, like Huckleberry Finn, it may arouse the spirit of adventure in some of your young people, or at least cause no end of gossip?"

"Now you *are* laughing at us. You see we live right here on the Mississippi, which makes Huckleberry Finn seem well, . . . too close . . ." her brow ruffled as the difficulty of expressing herself grew. "But a thing like the tapestry . . . well, it's too big. You can't gossip about a thing like that . . . It's a thing complete in itself; it's . . . it's finished . . . It is history . . . Oh, dear, I can't say what I mean, I never could and you know it, Sid Verrell, specially when I try to talk high-brow."

Verrell joined her laughter as he rose to go, unaccountably cheered by her little burst of naturalness.

He wished the call were just beginning as he had wanted to ask about old friends, but Kitty had been so busy entertaining him that he had had no opportunity, but he beamed on her so genially and spoke with such warmth of seeing her tomorrow at the gallery, that after he left, her smile still lingered, and as she lay down to rest a little before dinner, she thought with satisfaction:

"Well, the tea and everything was quite a success."

II

"I HAD hoped to bring you up here to see this room before the mob got in," Steve Pindar said to Verrell as they mounted the library steps. "I put in more good licks of actual work on it than I did for the Town Hall and our seven story Masonic Temple, the two enduring monuments to the genius they all accord me, but declare I'm too lazy to exercise."

Steve seemed little changed from the tall, shambling boy who had been Verrell's most intimate boyhood friend. His clothes were good, but they were unpressed and looked as though they had been thrown at him; his thick hair rose in a shaggy mop over his high forehead,

and his deep-set eyes had the same quizzical, ironical keenness that used to make Verrell squirm. Despite his generally rumpled appearance, there was something about him that made you feel that he would be at home in any company. It was his naturalness, his entire lack of pretense.

"You know this room has to serve a two-fold purpose," Steve explained, "for the dear ladies, our old friend, Kitty Bowers in particular, will never be satisfied until they have what Kit calls 'a regular art gallery,' and in planning a wing to the library, I had to think of it as the ultimate home of books. Small as it is, I've put the best of myself into it."

There were not more than twenty-five or thirty people in the gallery when Verrell and Steve entered; most of them were engaged at the tea-table and for the moment their entrance was unnoticed.

It was a long, low room with perhaps half a hundred paintings distributed over the walls. Despite a sense of bare austerity, it was distinguished by the beauty of perfect proportions. It was a room prepared for a long life, there were no makeshifts, no restless, unrelated details; there was a rich intention of leisure and seclusion in the arrangement of the great fireplace, the long windows with deep embrasures and opaque shades on which the April sunshine threw suggestive, patterned outlines of branch and tree. At the end, opposite the fireplace, hung the beautiful old tapestry.

A glance convinced Verrell that Kitty had been correct in her classification of it as 'a genuine.' But he turned away, filled with the strangest rush of nostalgia for the futile, half-forgotten dreams of his youth, a realization of why Steve Pindar, with his great talent and fine perceptions, was willing to stay in this quiet, Middle Western town, hugging his spiritual isolation, far off from the terrific invasion of *things* that beset one in a great city.

"It's fine, Steve. It tells me a lot,"

he turned impulsively to his friend who stood with his hands thrust into the pockets of his shapeless coat.

"Thanks, I thought you'd get it," Steve's face lit with his charming infrequent smile, but you came to look at the tapestry and to be petted and pampered, not to look at my room," and he nodded to the end wall where the tapestry hung. "It's a good 'un. The only real thing in the town, about the only thing worth looking at . . . with one exception," he added, as they strolled down the room.

"Who is that woman talking to Kitty Bowers?" Verrell demanded sharply.

"The exception," Steve replied drily, "surely you remember her."

III

SHE stood directly in front of the tapestry, her face turned a little in profile as she listened to Kitty who, in contrast to the quiet composure of her listener, seemed to be shouting and gesticulating wildly.

She was tall and very slender, and her clothes, although in no sense to be termed fashionable, had a richness and distinction that made the other women look cheap and overdressed. She was perhaps forty-five or so, and yet her face bore no markings of age except an expression of enormous knowledge of life; certain experiences had given her an ultimate wisdom and life had no further secrets to reveal. There was no sparkle or brilliancy about her, everything seemed faded to a soft neutrality, like the blurred tones of the old tapestry behind her.

As Verrell turned wonderingly to his friend, Steve said swiftly:

"It's Meg Trowbridge, she married Harry Potter, he's dead . . . Ah, they've spotted you . . . here they come, like the Greeks, bearing gifts," and instantly they were surrounded by a bevy of women offering tea, sandwiches, cakes, introductions, the tapestry, and over all, the insistent demand if he didn't find Baldwinsville changed.

Verrell remembered Meg Trowbridge

as a tall reserved girl whom the other girls called "stuck up." Her parents had come from the East and they lived in a big white house a little way out from town overlooking the river.

While resenting an unacknowledged superiority in Meg Trowbridge there had always been a delightful sense of favour and distinction in her friendship. To be asked to spend a week-end with her put the stamp on a girl's niceness, for it was understood that Mrs. Trowbridge was particular and only "nice" girls were asked to stay with them. The boys liked to mention casually that they had been out to Trowbridge's for Sunday night supper, and as Verrell stole an occasional glance at her face it grew more familiar; he remembered that delicately poised smile on the finely drawn corners of her mouth, and presently, when he spoke with her, he recognized the charming inflection of her voice which he used to think was her greatest attraction.

She met him with all her old courteous graciousness, graciousness a little exaggerated now, as though an extra garment put on for protection.

"And Steve," she turned with a smile of affection to Pindar, who stood with his hands still in his pockets, as he had refused tea. "How natural it seems to see you two together again. When are you coming out to see me? I was going to write and suggest Sunday night for supper. I haven't grown up with Baldwinsville; I don't even possess such a thing as a tea-cart, so you'll get an old-fashioned hot supper. Do come, just we three. You know I still live in the old white house by the river, although the neighbourhood has gone down fearfully, my friends tell me."

Her voice was friendly, almost gay, but Verrell was acutely conscious of her faint, smiling plane of detachment. There was nothing condescending in her manner, and yet her friends approached her with the air of courting favour, he felt that they deferred to her, studied her, despaired of reproducing and yet constantly strove to imitate.

IV

"WHAT happened to Meg?" Verrell asked abruptly, as he and Steve sat before the fireplace after dinner.

"What do you mean . . . happened?"

"To change her so . . . To make her look like that."

"How does she look to you?" Steve asked with curiosity.

"I hardly know," Verrell replied, picking his words. "She isn't hard, she's almost too gentle; but there is something inflexible, something so aloof . . . so perfect . . . I can't express it . . ."

"You've expressed it exactly," Steve replied. "I thought perhaps Kit Bowers might tell you about it when you were teasing with her, still Kit is a loyal soul. For a woman who talks all of the time and mostly like a fool, Kit hardly ever talks about people. When I don't have to be where she is, I have a real affection for her."

Steve paused for a long moment and then began slowly.

"You remember Meg Trowbridge was always a sort of princess to us kids. They were richer than most of us and I suspect better bred, certainly Meg was more carefully reared than the other girls around here. I don't think I was ever in love with her, and yet I've never been wholly out of love with her . . . There has never been anyone else. As a boy I found something intriguing about her. I used to think it was on account of her different bringing up, she dressed differently, she talked differently; you remember they used to go East every summer, and it seemed to me that she brought something to me that made Baldwinsville less of a spiritual desert where, in the rebellion of my youth, I used to think nothing human could take rootage at all. It used to puzzle me and flatter me a little too, when the boys and girls spoke of her as 'cold,' for I knew her to be full of fire and warmth and beautiful generosity, controlled by a fine reticence. We were always good friends, and I had her confidence . . . more than poor Harry or Harve Spence ever had it."

"Harve Spence?" Verrell's voice was incredulous. "I'd forgotten him. Didn't he sing or draw . . . what was it? . . . Of course, I remember, that beautiful tenor voice . . . Did he ever do anything with it?"

"No, and he did draw, too, and he never did anything with that, either, although he had plenty of opportunities. He was about as worthless as a man could well be, and yet . . . she was mad about him."

"Not Meg?"

"Yes, Meg. It began long before anyone suspected it, even Harve himself, when she was a little girl and we used to go serenading. You remember we always made Harve sing the verses and we came in strong on the chorus," Verrell nodded, smiling slightly. "As we grew older half the girls in town were in love with his good looking face, his beautiful voice, but it wasn't until you had been away from here two or three years, that his name and Meg's began to be coupled, to the dismay of her parents, you may be sure. Harve wouldn't work and he drank a little, his grandfather offered to send him abroad to study music or architecture, but he had no ambition. I remember how bitterly I used to envy him his opportunities. Finally the Trowbridges took Meg to California for the winter and while they were away the Spences moved South and of course Harve went with them."

"When Meg came back she seemed cured of her old infatuation and within six months Harry Potter began dangling. That pleased everyone. Harry belonged to a good family, he was building up a good law practice and he was frantically in love with Meg. I'll take that word back, it wasn't so much frantic desire, as a desperate earnestness in his regard for her."

"It used to trouble me, for, in spite of what I shall tell you, he was the squarest fellow I ever knew, and I think Meg almost loved him, and would have done so wholly if grandfather Spence hadn't died just then and left his money to Harve, who came back at this unlucky moment. He was better-looking and

more fascinating than ever and his little fortune gave reasonable excuse for his continued idleness. He was generous, ever ready to help anyone in need or trouble, as tender as a woman, but too shiftless to do anything save lie around the hotel or go hunting. We had a little lodge down in Berrick's forest, half way between here and Oldport."

"I remember," Verrell interrupted, "we used to go picknicking there."

"That's the place. Well, Harve spent half his time out there. When he couldn't get any of his own crowd, he'd take out a bunch of river toughs; I suspect they didn't do much hunting and wild tales, no doubt exaggerated, used to be told of their drinking and gambling. Meg knew all about it, you may be sure her friends let her know, although I don't suppose there was one of them who wouldn't have been glad to take a chance on Harve. His good looks, his amiability and his money made him a desirable catch in the eyes of most of the girls and some mothers, but the Trowbridges were distracted, and to this day I can't bear to think of Harry Potter's face during that time, although he never said a word to any one.

"Of course Meg wasn't happy. She felt guilty about Harry and Harve neglected and humiliated her in about every way a man could humiliate a proud girl, but she loved him through it all. He loved her too, I'll say that for him, and he suffered horribly when he had hurt her, but he always suffered too late.

"I used to talk to him, Meg asked me to, you can see how she humbled herself, but it always ended in his talking to me and convincing me that he was going to do better. Oh I talked to them both . . . I actually thought I could talk Meg out of her infatuation or shame Harve into leaving her alone, but," he laughed shortly, "you could no more have kept those two apart than you could have kept apart two chemicals that had suddenly evidenced an affinity for one another. Of course the result was an explosion . . . But I'm getting ahead of my story.

"Meg's parents were planning to take her to Europe for a year, when Harve suddenly proposed that they should go over to Dixon, the county-seat, and be married at once, to which she instantly agreed.

"To prevent suspicion, Harve was to go over on Sunday, ostensibly to look up titles on some of his deeds, and they agreed not to write or hold any communication with each other until they met in Dixon Tuesday morning when they would be married.

"Well, Tuesday Meg waited all day long in that stuffy little hotel parlor and Harve never showed up. God knows what was in that girl's heart as she started for the train to take her back to Baldwinsville.

"As she left the hotel she met Harry Potter face to face. For a moment she was panic-stricken, she had a guilty feeling that he was hunting for her, then she instantly realized that he often had to be in Dixon on law business. He didn't ask her a single question, but as they started down the street, he told her that the train was an hour late and suggested that they go over and sit in the little park as it was pleasanter than the station or hotel. As they seated themselves, she turned to him desperately:

"'Harry, do you know anything about Harve?' she didn't care what he thought or suspected, and after a moment's silence, Harry replied: 'He's at the lodge, Meg.'

"'Did he go hunting? Do you know that he's there?'

"'Yes, he went hunting. He's been there since Sunday.'

"Meg blanched, and then whispered: 'Has he been drinking?'

"'I . . . I don't know Meg . . . I guess not . . . ' His reluctant reply only confirmed her suspicions. I don't know what else she asked him or told him. I don't know what they talked about, but they missed the train. They didn't take the train that night at all. They were married at eight o'clock in the Methodist parsonage and returned to Baldwinsville the next day.

"It came like a thunderclap, but the

Trowbridges were so relieved that they couldn't pretend much displeasure at the unconventional wedding.

"Harry took her to his home where he and his father lived alone with a couple of nigger servants. I didn't see him but once before what I'm going to tell you happened, and then it seemed to me that he took his luck too seriously. I remember I chaffed him a little and was tactless enough to tell him that it didn't do to serve a woman kneeling, that they liked a little neglect and abuse. I could have bitten my tongue out when I saw him wince.

"The third day after their marriage was one of those cold rainy days we sometimes have out here in October. Meg was sitting by the window when she saw Tobe Sawyer, one of the river toughs, standing at the gate making strange signs to attract her attention. She ran to the door, filled with a nameless dread, and called to him. He shuffled up the walk, his coat collar turned up and his hat pulled down over his face, an insufficient protection against that steady downpour.

"It's Harve Spence," he mumbled. 'He keeps yellin' for you.'

"Where is he?" she screamed.

"Out to the lodge in Berrick's forest. Been sick a week . . . crazy as a loon from the start. I came in las' Tuesday and tried to fin' you but the nigger up to your house tole me you'd gone out to spen' the day, so I tole a feller I met on the street and he said he'd fin' you. Harve kep' yellin' somethin' about meetin' you in Dixon, but he was ravin' about all kin's of things.'

"Did you tell anybody else?" Meg asked, suddenly quiet. 'Have you had a doctor out to see him. Has he had proper food?'

"No, I didn't see nobody else who knew Harve; I had to get back to 'um, and I couldn't wait to hunt up his frien's. My folks lives in Oldport so I got a doctor over from there. Harve can't eat nothin'; the doctor says he's got pneumonia and is goin' to croak.'

"Occasionally it happens that a person

once in his life does one thing after which everything that occurs is of no consequence. Meg went into the house, packed a basket of food and medicine, got her hat, coat and umbrella and without a word to any one started for the lodge."

"She didn't walk to the forest?" Verrell interrupted.

"Yes, she did. She didn't even think of getting a rig from the stable. She was simply moved by a blind, unphrasable force that sent her forward.

"As she reached the open country the long icy spikes of rain seemed to point themselves at her slender figure and suddenly she found herself running. She had been to the lodge dozens of times, and she knew the way, but she lost herself repeatedly, tripping, stumbling through the mud and underbrush. She was half blinded and soaked to the skin; her hands and clothing were torn, but she kept her basket safe and she ran . . . ran, tireless . . . one tremendous and masterful impulse drawing her on.

"At seven o'clock she stumbled into the lodge, water-soaked, her hat and umbrella lost and her teeth chattering with the cold. Tobe had left a fire on the hearth and in one of the rude bunks Harve lay raving in delirium.

"She stayed a week. The disease reached a crisis the day after she got there and Harve immediately began to mend. Inside of twenty-four hours everybody in town knew that Meg had run away from Harry and was staying at the lodge with Harve Spence. You can imagine how tongues wagged; but gradually the truth, or something like it, leaked out, and suddenly the most curious silence fell over the people of this place . . . the subject was avoided like the plague, but everybody knew that everybody else was thinking of it to the exclusion of everything else.

"What did Harry do?" Verrell demanded.

"He went out there immediately. He told me that when he opened the door Meg was feeding Harve. She didn't even lay down the spoon, just moved so Harve couldn't see him, and then she sat

and stared at him for what seemed an eternity, and he backed out without saying a word."

"And left her there?"

"What else could he do? None of the Trowbridges went near the lodge. Harry sent out a nurse, but Meg wouldn't let her stay. A few days later he came to my office and asked me to go out and see if there was anything I could do for them. It didn't strike me as funny or grotesque that he should make such a request. It was horrible . . . I felt as though Harry Potter began to die at that moment.

"I went out and found Meg reading aloud to Harve who was propped up in bed. We had all hoped he would die. I had come with bitterness in my heart toward Meg for the suffering and shame she had caused Harry and her family, but something in her face and Harve's groping, clinging hands, choked me and for a moment I could not speak.

"Isn't it wonderful?" she greeted me gaily. 'He's almost well. In another week I'll be able to take him home.' I knew she had not told him a word about her marriage to Harry, and I simply couldn't think what their going back would mean to all of us.

"I stayed all night, but she wouldn't let me touch Harve, not even to lift him a little on the pillow. She told me that Tobe Sawyer had been with her most of the time and the doctor had come out from Oldport every day, but she had done all of the nursing herself. I dozed a little on one of the bunks, but every time I looked up she was bending over Harve or crouched down in front of the fire, waiting . . . waiting. Once I saw her smile strangely as she added a log to the blaze.

"The next morning Harve's temperature was normal and he declared he was going to sit up. Meg asked me to go to the neighboring farm house for milk and eggs. I was gone perhaps half an hour and when I came back Meg was standing outside the door.

"Did you come in a buggy Steve?" she called.

"Yes," I indicated the horse which was tied to a tree at the edge of the clearing.

"Then we'll go back this morning."

"I set the pail down with a splash. I hadn't counted on her asking this of me. 'But Harve isn't fit to move; he's better, but . . .'

"Oh, no, Harve won't go. He's all right.' Her voice was tranquil, and her face, well . . . everything about her face had changed . . . she looked just as she does now; she's never changed much since. Something made me begin to tremble. 'He isn't . . . ?' I stammered.

"Yes, you were hardly out of sight when he asked me to lift him up, and when I laid him down he was gone."

"But we can't leave him . . . I'll go . . ."

"No, there's no need to stay now. We've done all we could for each other,' and with that cryptic sentence she went into the lodge for her things."

"Where did you take her?" Verrell asked.

"Home . . . that is Harry's home. I started to turn into the river road, but she stopped me; 'I think I'd rather go home if you don't mind Steve,' she said softly, so I left her and went and told Harry.

"What happened?" Verrell asked.

"Nothing. She took up her life just where she had left it. Harry told me just before he died that they never even mentioned it between them. She never attempted any justification or explanation. She never seemed unhappy or even to be remembering. It was as though all of life's experiences had been crowded into that week at the lodge, and the world for her thereafter was peopled with a host of shadows. There has always been something unreal about her, and yet," Steve paused, musing, "she's the realest thing I've ever known . . . Well, it killed Harry. He only lived three years."

V

THE two men sat silent for a time, then Verrell asked hesitatingly,

"Was Harry the chap Tobe Sawyer saw the day he came for Meg?"

"I don't know. They both confided in me pretty freely, but that's the one thing they neither of them ever told me . . . that and one other," and after a pause, "I've sometimes wondered which one of them first suggested their hasty marriage as they sat in the park that night in Dixon waiting for the train."

"And do you mean to tell me that Baldwinsville didn't gossip about a thing like that?" Verrell demanded.

"Well, it depends upon what you call gossip. I suppose they talked, but it never affected Meg's position, if that's what you mean. Gossip implies future complications, consequences; but this was a thing complete in itself . . . finished. You can't gossip about a thing like that . . . It's too big."

"Kitty Bowers said something like that about the tapestry," Verrell smiled musingly.

"I like Kit; she's sometimes the wisest fool I know," said Steve.



Sic Semper

By John F. Lord

HE loved two women. May made no secret of her affection. She constantly showed him in every way she could that she loved him. June was different. She had the true woman's instinct. She pretended to be cold to him. She was indifferent to his manifestations of affection. He married May.



ONLY a fool takes two girls out to supper at the same time. Each will have not only her own unfavourable impression but also the unfavourable impression of the other.



RELIGION: Faith that there is one who rules our lives.
 Marriage: Knowledge that there is one who rules our lives.



MARRIAGE is a romance in which the hero dies in the first chapter.



The Intelligent Deckhand Who Sank the Boat

By Joseph Bibb, Jr.

A DECKHAND who, though untutored, was a man of penetration and logic, found employment on a ferryboat plying upon a large bay. In the beginning he stood in awe of those who went to and fro, for he was come from afar.

"In truth," said he, "these must be persons of position for they have much leisure to spend thus in travel, and undoubtedly they are folk of rank, who have moreover attained wisdom, for they are absorbed some in converse, others in contemplation, so that they have no time for the humble nor for the affairs that occupy ordinary mortals."

As he went among them with broom and other tools of a mariner's trade—for to disturb the travellers upon every occasion was one of the duties imperatively laid upon him—he took opportunity, being desirous of self-improvement, to seek the lowermost secrets of their wise superiority. The diligence of his inquiry was such that he earned the commendation of his overseers for the inconvenience caused by his mop and dustcloth. And as his worth grew in the eyes of his masters, so within the speechless precincts of his mind did his amazement. For he was of an exceptional intelligence.

So unflagging were his studies that upon his four hundred and third voyage no thought of the passengers, neither in their speech nor their silence, was withheld from him, and at the six hundred and eighty-ninth his spirit groaned, and at the nine hundredth he said in righteous anger, "What purpose serve they, thus making life a shuttle without a thread? Time is naught to them, else they would not spread it upon the waters, and they worship blindly a god who imposes the carrying of burdens at great weariness. Fish! If they were given a burden not to be set down they would the more rejoice and one for whom time is nothing would be the happier in eternity. Assuredly there are ferries that traverse for aye a certain dark river of which I have heard tell, and there might they all be at peace."

So, having a philosophy of action and being well versed in the structure of ships, he opened the seacocks with such cunning that the ferryboat sank in forty fathoms at the spot where the swiftest tide ran seaward. And all aboard were drowned, clinging to their bundles, save only the deckhand, who swam lustily to shore.

For there were still many other ferryboats.



The Accompanist

By Floy Pascal Cowan

I

I COULDN'T say how or when Miss Wrenn came among us, and I doubt if any of the others could. She had possibly never made a conspicuous entrance in her life. But I believe she must have been there a long time before I became aware of her, for she gave me no sensation of novelty. She was just there! And I seemed to have vague reminiscent pictures of her going about the streets, always gliding along unobtrusively and very quickly as if no time must be lost. There were no high lights in those pictures, however.

She was a small dark little woman, and it was matter for quiet mirth to me that of all things her name should be Wrenn. "Any of numerous small singing birds." I smiled, my finger on the word in the dictionary. It just couldn't have happened! I played with the notion that she had assumed that name, seeing herself quite plainly.

We musicians were a queer assortment; some amateurs, some professionals, a few society folks, with the common bond of love for music.

We made public appearances at concerts from time to time, we played church organs, and sang in choirs and at funerals, and taught classes. But we talked high art when we met together and were full of enthusiasms and hidden harmless vanities, and vague ambitions for our little talents.

Miss Wrenn played most of our accompaniments. She did it so well, and with evident contentment in the unassuming rôle.

We had got into the habit of meeting

in our various studios or homes to talk and play, and one evening following directions, I climbed the four flights in a dingy old building to Miss Wrenn's abode, lugging my precious violoncello warily around sharp corners in the dim light. I heard a beginner's drumming on the piano before the door was opened to admit me.

"You teach late," I said when the pupil had gone.

"And early," she smiled.

"You are fortunate to have a large class!"

"Yes, indeed! It abridges other things, though, of course. One gets in queer habits. At noon while someone is doing a scale, I go behind the screen—that's my kitchenette!—and eat something out of a can, and get back before lower C is reached."

"Heavens! Aren't you dead by night?"

"Sometimes."

"When you are not, I suppose you go behind the screen and eat something else out of a can?"

She smiled, moving about in her noiseless way, straightening things up a bit.

"It would be droll if I got so I couldn't eat any other way, wouldn't it? I heard of a man once who always took his own cup and saucer in his pocket when he went out to dine."

"I can imagine the dullest dinner party brightening up if you produced a can opener and can," I laughed.

As the others began to come in I sat looking about me and wondering what she did with the money she earned.

It must have taken a very small sum

indeed to buy the plain, drab things she wore. And one could hardly say the studio was furnished. It merely had a few things in it. There was no satisfaction of temperamental longings, no gaiety of color in the little workshop.

All that winter I had been going to the theater—we had but one!—before my eyes happened one evening to fall upon the back of the pianist in the orchestra.

Instantly I knew it was Miss Wrenn. Again, reminiscent pictures convinced me she had been playing there a long time. I had looked at her but had not seen her. It happened that I was nearer front than usual and at times could see her profile etched against the brilliant footlights as she followed the score or looked up now and then with a flash of amusement at the scene above her.

"The little wren is burning her candle at both ends," I thought between acts in a bored, vacant moment, and forgot it as the curtain went up again.

It was the following Autumn that F. Hilliard Dale arrived in our city. And his was distinctly a conspicuous entrance. He came with a blare of trumpets, so to speak, heralded, awaited. Letters of introduction had preceded him. Press notices from far metropolitan places challenged our attention. We were on tip-toe with interest, and thrilled because our provincial community had been chosen as his home.

I saw him for the first time at a musicale given shortly after his arrival and in his honor. He appeared as the brilliant figure, featured, illuminated by his eager hostess. He was tall, not undistinguished looking, well poised, graceful.

My first and lasting impression was of a joyous, volatile being with a tremendous, clamorous ego. After some of us lesser lights had shone to our full capacity, there was a moment of intense expectancy in which we watched him approach the piano, with his violin. He was very deliberate, as if to give us the chance to perceive the charm of his

personality before entralling us with his art.

I came away with a more vivid sense of his personality than of his art.

One was forced to admire the adroitness by which a small talent had been lifted from utter obscurity. Had he been less avid of applause, less egotistical, he could not have borne to parade it so bravely in the limelight. I wondered about those press notices—

He took possession of a very expensive studio and furnished it luxuriously. There was something exotic in the rich mosaic effect of Persian rugs, and tapestries of colorful books and pictures. One felt that here temperament was enthroned, pampered. He charged big sums for his lessons and those who could afford it went to him, with a sense of being honored that revealed itself in the light of their eyes as they said.

"I'm taking from Hilliard Dale. He's frightfully expensive, but—"

You see, he was an excellent poseur. He was able to make people take him at his own high valuation. And, he understood the little vanities of human nature.

From the first he fell into our sociable ways, and his gayety of spirit, his charm, and his intolerance of anything dull or dreary made us like to have him with us.

I caught little glimpses from time to time that winter of things that had gone into the making of Miss Wrenn's simple history. One evening I noticed a photograph of a young man on her piano. It interested me.

"That is my young brother," she said, coming to my side and looking at the picture, too. "Poor fellow! He is very frail."

"His face is most attractive, and—appealing."

"He has inherited a trouble that runs fitfully through our family. He's up in the mountains now—has been for some years—trying to get strong."

"Alone?"

"No—he married when just a boy."

"You take care of them?" I could not restrain the question.

"There's no one else for them to look to—poor children."

"I daresay you began taking care of people in your cradle."

"I think I must have fixed my own milk bottles." She answered my smile. "And made my own baby clothes. It was perhaps good for me—I don't know. My mother was always ill, and she died when this boy was born. I was eight then, and I remember as if it were yesterday burning my paper dolls and taking charge. I don't seem to have minded the work, but it puzzled and distressed me that there never was enough money."

"I can see my father's face now—leaving me of mornings—harassed and old—and telling me with a hurt, humiliated look in his eyes to 'put off the milkman,' or tell the grocer he would pay him next week. But next week he couldn't pay and there would be more putting off. And at times I would come across him sitting bent over a book that I learned was some mysterious thing connected with money or the shortage of money. A bank book! It seemed a terrible possession to me, for my father's face was always gloomy and disappointed as he looked into it and did endless figuring on a paper beside it."

"It got too much for him, I suppose, the worry and strain. There was one morning when he couldn't get up. I seemed to know then that he never would again. His face was grey—with a beaten look—"

"I slipped out of the room and looked into my little purse. There were only a few pennies. They went into his trousers pockets—where there was nothing at all. The bank book was on a high shelf of the bookcase. I climbed up and got it down and sat puzzling over it, unable to think what its figures meant, and unable to think how I was going to get food and things we needed. When I went back to him he said:

"Janet, you'll have to write to—"

cousin Hal—and tell him—I'm ill, and ask him to—loan us a little money."

"I thought it would kill me to write that letter! I would write one word then take a look at his pitiful face to get the desperate courage for the next one. My cousin helped us, but a bit ungraciously, grudgingly. He had never tasted the bitterness of failure, or want. You know how intolerant such people are!

"The sense of humiliation stayed with me. I made up my mind then that I would never have to ask anybody for money if I worked my fingers off."

She turned to her desk and picked up a little book, a faint smile on her lips.

"My bank book. It hasn't been much that I could lay by, but every cent that could be saved has gone into the little pile. My independence!"

My eyes swept the bare little room—understanding.

"You haven't had any fun, have you?" I asked.

"No—but I don't believe I expected any."

To me it seemed worse not to have expected fun than just not to have had it!

But I don't mean to picture her for you in pitiful colors. For she wasn't pitiful! There was a certain serenity—her face never wore a worried look. As near as I can express it she had the calm of one sitting at a window giving upon a familiar but not exciting scene.

"Well, life is like this," she seemed to be thinking. "What can one do about it?"

Can you see her now coming into the beautiful, softly lighted studio of Hilliard Dale with its rhythm of color as surely sensuous as the lilting cadence of a melody of love? Sitting there at his big piano, the rose light falling upon her little, brown, emotionless face, playing his accompaniments? She played them very beautifully, sympathetically, never thrusting her part upon one's notice.

Well, Hilliard Dale never saw her. She was done in far too quiet colors to

catch his eye. But, he allowed no one else to play his accompaniments.

One evening we were in his studio, and he was standing in the center of the room talking gaily. He looked particularly winning, with his light, soft hair waving back from his laughing face, and his slender, graceful body swaying with merry, mimic gestures.

Miss Wrenn was sitting at the piano, but facing us. My glance happened to fall upon her. She was looking at Dale.

For an instant the impassive expression lifted like a curtain, and I saw her spirit alight with emotion. Love and longing and a kind of rapture were there. Then the curtain fell. She turned to the piano, drawing her fingers softly across the keys.

"Poor little Jenny Wrenn!" I thought, with sharp pain in my heart. "Singing her song of love to the brilliant Cardinal who does not even know she exists!"

II

I AM not sure just when it was that I began to sense the progress of another drama, but I think it was about this time.

There was a very beautiful society woman, a Mrs. Snowden, who was with us a great deal. She had a voice of wonderful purity and sweetness and sang as naturally and simply as a bird, and with as evident and naïve delight in her own performance. Sometimes her husband, a dark, trim-looking, rather commonplace young man, would come with her. But he was plainly bored by music. So usually she came alone, and the big limousine waited. I had often to smile at the incongruity of that symbol of luxury standing in front of our humble doors.

It was something of a shock to me one evening as I came out into the night to see Hilliard Dale putting Mrs. Snowden into her car and getting in after her.

Yet, surely, I argued to myself, it was a harmless enough thing on the face of it. If it had been Evan, the harpist—

pale and unmagnetic—would I have given it a thought?

Several times, later, I was aware of a rather furtive withdrawal of the two while we were still playing.

One evening as I descended the long, winding steps in an old building from Yandel's sky-high studio, Dale's unmistakable soft, low laughter and a woman's delicious treble floated up to me. I may have quickened my pace. Who has not his little curiosity where the great game is being played?

Just as I came out of the door Dale and Mrs. Snowden had reached the car and were in the act of getting in.

I stepped back quickly into the shadow, for young Snowden jumped out of the car and helped his wife in.

The street lamp shone on his face, which was white and tense with anger as he looked at Dale—making no salutation whatever. Then he got in and slammed the door.

I shall never forget the sensation of horror with which, coming out into the moonlight one night with the gay insouciance of a Chopin waltz, someone had been playing, lifting our spirits, we found Dale lying on the pavement, still and limp. We thought him dead. I steadied a little figure that for an instant swayed against me, and looked down into Miss Wrenn's face, white as the one upon the pavement.

When Dale came to he made light of the jagged hole through his left lung.

"Always looking for a new opening!" he jested. "No right to complain of this one."

He had no idea who did the thing! Not the slightest!

It was not for me to tell what I knew. But I saw that tragedy, stark and grim and quick in the moonlight, as if I had witnessed it.

Dale came out of the hospital emaciated and with a queer baffled look I have sometimes seen in some winged creature of the air brought down with tragic swiftness from its gay flight, dumbly suffering a mortal hurt, and not understanding. In a way, with all his sophistication and his egotism that

shrewdly served itself, he was a joyous child of nature who drank from bubbling fountains as if by right.

He told us he was going away just for a little while. But we found, afterward, that he had sold his belongings.

I no doubt smiled cynically, a little later, when I learned that Mrs. Snowden had obtained a divorce and had also gone away.

Miss Wrenn went about her work as usual. But she seemed to have grown smaller and darker as the days passed, like a plant will when denied the sun.

We met together but fitfully for a while as it happened. Some few fortunes went away for a little study in New York, others were too busy to come.

One evening I climbed the long stairs to see Miss Wrenn and found her door locked and a note tacked on it saying she would be away for a few weeks. And I turned away sadly, for I knew the young brother must be worse. She did not return, however, even when the weeks had grown into months.

A year, perhaps, went by.

One day a telegram came to me from some place out West, saying that Dale had died that day and would be brought home for burial. It was signed, "Mrs. Hilliard Dale."

How strange that she should want to bring him back for burial! It argued something in her so insensitive as to be almost gross. For she must have known that we musicians, at least, knew how nearly scandal had come to touching her and Dale.

But a second telegram made me feel that it was his wishes she was carrying out. There were some of us he wanted to play certain beloved pieces; there were flowers particularly loved he wanted on his bier. How like him it was—pampering his ego, asking that the stage be perfectly set, the lights just so, for his last exit!

We were all down at the station when the train came in.

It was not Mrs. Snowden but little Janet Wrenn who stepped down to the

platform. We looked at her utterly dumb with surprise.

She was the same quiet little body, looking almost shabby in an old black dress and hat, and a new but—even to masculine eye—cheap and skimpy black veil.

We wanted to pay for the funeral and the flowers and the trip. We were eager to help. But she would not hear of it. I caught that proud note of independence in her refusal. She assured us she had ample funds for all expenses.

We did our little best—playing the pieces he loved. And we sent flowers—not for the bier! She wanted to pay for those!—but to bank round the altar, and later cover the ground about his slim six feet of earth.

And then it was all over, and she went back to her teaching, and her swift glidings about the streets, and her playing in the orchestra.

III

By piecing together little bits I got something of the story, but not much.

Someone, returning after a long stay in the West, told me of coming across Dale by chance some months after his leaving us. He was living in great poverty and dying slowly of tuberculosis that had fastened like a devouring flame on the wounded lung and was licking its way.

He knew that he was doomed, it seems, when he went away. I suppose he had thought to die more quickly, and that what he had would suffice. He had paid his debts, which were large, and little had remained. But, as I say, he had thought to die more quickly.

I gathered that he had been bored beyond measure to be living so long, and humiliated over his helplessness. But he had stoically refused assistance.

Whether he finally sent for Miss Wrenn, or she found out about him and went because he was alone, and in want, and she loved him, will remain a mystery, for she laid a mantle of silence over those days by his side as irrevocable as the quiet sod above his grave.

I know that the bank account built up with such labor, and infinitely hard denial of all her cravings for the beauty and light and gaiety of life—was wiped out.

But there is another thing that sometimes seems to me almost unbearable not to know. In those long months together did he learn to care for her?

Not that he was worthy of her! But I wanted so to believe that her drab little existence had had the great kindling spark!

I do not know, however. Her face keeps that look of quiet serenity—of one who knows life, and does not expect too much.



Art Crushed to Earth

By T. M. Fairchild

HIS first appearance as an actor was not a happy one. The audience, with even more than its customary discernment, rose to a man and showered him with criticism, chiefly in the form of tomatoes and eggs. He, however, writhed and twisted to such an agile degree that none of the criticism scored a direct hit. This was his ray of sunshine. A vaudeville manager in the audience engaged him as a contortionist.



Peace

By Marvin Luter Hill

Lover, I am tired now, and the end is near;
They bring me ghostly bread and wine but I only hear
The happy wind, the April wind, go singing in the mere.

Lover, I have peace now, the peace of Paradise;
They comfort me with holy things—the saintly ones and wise—
But oh, to see the love again in your gray eyes.



The Escape

By Van Vechten Hostetter

JOHN MORDANT was born in a city not far from the center of the United States—a provincial metropolis that boasted—literally—more lofty buildings and big department stores, more brilliantly lighted and paved streets, more churches and trolley cars and more riches than Wilmington, Delaware, although it was not so large as Wilmington by some eighty thousand souls.

The city also possessed more hypocrisy, snobbery and sordidness than Wilmington and the whole of the Atlantic seaboard. But it bragged loudly of honesty, open-heartedness, broad-mindedness and democracy, always with the adjective "Western" prefixed, as if it were really Western and as if those qualities were the exclusive property of the West.

John Mordant's parents were worthy and rather dull. In another community they would have been regarded as valuable if not important members: here, having little money, they were absolute nobodies. They had, however, transmitted to their son blood that rose against his mean environment and was strong enough to carry him out of it.

John Mordant began to despise the city as soon as he began to understand it, which was about the time he entered high school. At eighteen he loathed it and only Mary Burgess made it tolerable. He loved her. She knew the city for what it was and loathed it almost as much as he. She would have loathed it just as much if her own feeling had not been influenced and somewhat modified by that of her mother and those of her brothers. They loved the city and helped it brag. They, too, were no-

bodies; but they had hopes of being rich and of being somebodies some day.

When John Mordant completed his law course—he was twenty-four—he begged his parents to go away with him, but it was too late. His father, who had never had much courage, had none now.

"I've a very good position and I'm sure of it," he said. "It would be very foolish to strike out for something new at my age."

John, with his five hundred dollars of savings in his pocket, went to Mary Burgess and told her he was going East—somewhere East—to practice his profession, to meet real people, to live and breathe, to grow.

He asked her to go with him. He knew she wanted to go, but she said:

"Not just yet. Mother thinks I'm too young. I know I'm not, of course—but she thinks so—and she needs me—for a while. Walter and Carl"—those were Mary's brothers—"are just beginning to get ahead with their automobile agency, you know, and they need all their money. If I didn't help them in the office they'd have to hire some one."

John broke in, protesting,

"Why is that your responsibility? Their getting ahead is their business. What about the fellows that haven't got sisters? Why must you order your life for them and go on sacrificing, sacrificing, just as you have been for years, for them? They don't do it for you!"

Mary smiled heroically, resignedly.

"I know. It isn't right, but I've got to stay here. They would never forgive me. John, I can't just break away from them. I would for you if I could, but I'd never be happy and so I couldn't make you happy. I've talked with them.

They won't give in, so I've got to. In a year or two . . . You can wait. . . . I know you will. It won't be long. The time will pass before you realize it."

John pleaded no more. He knew Mary's mother and knew her brothers. He knew how the selfish and unscrupulous have ever made consanguinity serve them in imposing on and cheating the generous and weak. Mary's mother and her brothers grudgingly admitted he was a "good enough" young man so far as mere morals went; but they had not concealed, had not had the wisdom or the decency to try to conceal from him that they considered him undesirable as a husband for Mary.

He knew that if he had had even as much as fifty thousand dollars they would have rushed Mary to the altar with him—by force almost if necessary—lest he change his mind. He knew that Mary with her dark beauty was to them an asset. He knew they were severely displeased with her and called her silly for refusing to encourage the "rich society men"—society men because they were rich—who occasionally happened into the office and smiled at her. They might have asked to call.

Knowing what he did, John knew pleading was hopeless. He had faith in Mary. His soul was choking in this sordid atmosphere. He must save himself. He would wait for her and come back for her. So he went away.

Within a year John's parents died—as they had wanted to die, together. He went back to bury them, wondering if he would have had the strength of will to do so without the compensation of seeing Mary.

A reporter for *The Herald* met him and asked if it wasn't good to be "back home."

"That is a rather odd question to ask a man who has just lost his only relatives in the world," he answered—a rebuke that was unappreciated. "It wouldn't seem good to be anywhere."

The Herald published a purported verbatim interview—more or less grammatical—lauding the city and intensify-

ing the laudation by disparaging the East. That was *The Herald's* policy. The readers loved such stuff. The city had no use for its poor citizens while they remained at home or when they went to "the coast" (meaning the Pacific coast); but when they went East it was always sure they carried its surpassing virtues there to compel recognition and admiration.

John Mordant, hating the place on its own account and because he felt that somehow it was responsible for the meanness in Mary's mother and brothers that had cost Mary so much, would have liked to say what he thought—which was:

"I see the town is a little bigger and more contemptible than ever. I see the first family in your so-called society is still the richest one. Its foundation was laid by lending trifling sums to struggling land-owners and foreclosing mortgages on their widows when they died. I see you still know no measure for anybody's worth but money. I see that your society elects to its clubs stock-brokers, shop-keepers and all who scramble for money and get it; while it excludes men who are composing music and painting pictures and haven't money. I see that even your patriotism is tainted with love of money. I see your rich enjoy your poor more than any other rich I know. They love to talk about their poor. It's such a wonderful way to emphasize their richness and their superiority."

After the funeral John renewed his appeal to Mary Burgess.

He had not set the world on fire, he told her, but he was making headway. He had some interesting and worthwhile friends. Several were musicians. One was a painter. Some others wrote. The man with whom he had been fortunate enough to become associated in practice was something of a leader in civic affairs. Some of John's friends were promising young lawyers. One of his clients frequently invited him to symphony concerts and the opera.

"Just a little while longer," Mary said. "Oh, I want to go back with you

—I do want to go—but I can't. I just can't."

"No," he said bitterly, "of course you can't. You've waited long enough. I've waited long enough. You have your life to live, but you can't live it because other people won't let you. Oh, justice! O Mother-love! Good God! What hypocrisy! What—"

She stopped him, begging,

"Dearest, I can't help it. Don't go on that way. It's hard enough for me. . . . hard enough for both of us. Don't—please—make it any harder."

So he went away again.

II

JOHN MORDANT struggled to rise in the world he had found. He had qualities that made him friends and he strove to deserve their friendship more and more. He had wit. He had brains and talent. They were recognized. The men he met seemed glad to help him. He was one of the most popular members of a little group that liked to talk of letters and the arts, of politics and ethics—of almost everything but the thing Mordant had come to hate to hear mentioned because it was discussed so to the exclusion of all else—the mere making of money. They called him affectionately "Big Blond John."

Yet Mordant was never happy. His heart was hungry with a hunger that only Mary Burgess could satisfy. He never was among friends enough to dispel his feeling of loneliness and incompleteness. Often all his strength was required to be companionable, interesting and brilliant and he would go to his rooms exhausted—but not to sleep; only to lie down in a torture of melancholy, cursing life for its cruelty. Once he wrote to Mary:

"I want you. I need you. You are part of me. I am part of you. You need me. There is life here and I want you to have it. There is inspiration. You deserve it. But that's secondary, after all. The great thing is that we belong to each other. How long must we go on living out our lives for other

people? When can we begin living them for ourselves?"

The answer was,

"Go on being brave and strong. It's hard for me, too. I'm always with you in spirit. We will be all the happier for having waited so long for our happiness."

But John's spirit cried out more and more bitterly. Every lost day was like a lost year—like a year of life for both of them, full, rich and sweet, lost irretrievably.

When his heart hunger had driven him to the mad desperation of a man whose body has starved too long he went back for Mary. Her year or two had grown to three, and four, and five. She was still beautiful, but in her eyes and the lines drawn around them he saw what bitter pain she had suffered in those years of self-abnegation. In his pity he forgot the torture that had put deep lines in his own face and rounded his big shoulders.

He stood before Mary's mother and her brothers, a man resolute and grim, come to claim his own and fight for it. They were hostile, but their courage failed at the sight of him. Mary had remained silly, but they had never ceased to hope until now.

"I've come for my girl," John said. "I'm going away again tomorrow and I'm not going without her. She's going with me whether you like it or not."

He did not raise his voice nor shake his fists, but there was steel in his words. "You ought to like it. It will be better for Mary and all of us if you do. I'm ready to fight you all with my hands and take her away bodily if I have to."

Mary's brothers sat and stared inanely. They lacked even the courage to show resentment. John was filled with contempt for them and reproach for himself for having waited so long to do this thing. It was so easy to do and he should have realized long ago that it must be done.

Mrs. Burgess answered in the manner of a martyr—with that magnificent hypocrisy with which women and effeminate men deceive even themselves.

"I'm sure Mary has always been free to marry you. I know I have never tried to hinder her."

John held his lips firm to conceal his scorn.

"Then don't try to hinder her now," he said. "When I come back to this house in the morning I want to come for a happy girl. I don't want to take her away miserable because you're not reconciled. But, I'm going to take her, miserable or not."

III

JOHN MORDANT had blessed the fifteen hundred miles he had placed between them and the despised city. He and Mary had escaped, he had thought, and those miles insured their freedom. But he had not considered the mails. He had not realized how well they could serve the purpose of the mischief maker. Nor had he realized that Mary might not have wholly escaped the taint of her mean environment.

Mary met John's friends and they liked her—liked her for her beauty and her wit. She was overwhelmed by their intellect and genius. (It was the only intellect and genius she had known.) She described them in long, dutiful letters to her mother.

Mrs. Burgess was very glad her daughter was finding such interesting friends. She did not neglect, however, to say it was a pity John did not know more "big business men." It was nice to know the others, who were, of course, quite worth while in their way, but "it's getting in with the big business men that puts you ahead."

Mary, without mentioning her mother, suggested this to John.

"It all depends on what you consider getting ahead," he said. "Making money is not specially 'getting ahead' here, you know. Of course, we want all we can get without sacrificing the bigger and finer things than money. We're doing very well, I think. I have some very good clients."

"Of course," Mary said, "money isn't everything."

"It's very far from being everything," John said. "We have friends that are of the finest people in this town, and so regarded, and have less money than we."

"Yes," said Mary, "but it's not being poor that makes them fine."

"No, certainly not," he said, giving her her last word.

One night Mary read of the latest sensational case of a great criminal lawyer. He was defending some mail fraud syndicate.

"My, he must make piles of money!" she exclaimed. "Why don't you get cases like that, John?"

He answered, a little irritated because she had to ask,

"They tried to employ Mr. Wharton and me. We don't want that kind of business."

Once when he had told her with enthusiastic admiration how Henry Corlear had refused a commission to paint a magazine advertisement for a soap concern she laughed.

"How foolish," she said. "Can't he see their money is as good as any one's?"

John threw up his hands in irritation.

"Good heavens," he cried, "can't you see he's a gentleman? Can't you *see* why he refused? If you can't I can't tell you!"

"I've heard he owes everybody," Mary flashed. "I'd rather paint soap advertisements than be in debt."

"Well, that's where you're different from many others," said John. "The people he owes money to admire him for what he is, for his genius and his ideals. They'd rather lend him money and never get it back than have him paint soap advertisements. That's how much *they* think of money!"

"They can think as they please," said Mary. "I think it is a very fine thing."

John jumped up from his chair, throwing down his newspaper, and glared at her.

"Good God, then, why didn't you stay out among the money worshippers?"

"Because I didn't worship it," she said defiantly. "I don't worship it now."

"Yes you do. You think money, money, money!"

"I think nothing of the sort. Neither do I think against it all the time—neither do I hold it in contempt, and consider it a virtue not to have any and to be in debt. You told me these were real people and they're no more real than the others I grew up with. I wish there *were* some real ones—just ordinary decent people, just people that weren't crazy about money and weren't crazy with egotism and self-admiration. I haven't seen any like that and I wish I could!"

John's lips moved as if he were about to speak. Then he threw up his hands in a gesture of hopelessness and turned away.

Mary did not find the people she wanted to see. She began to doubt their existence. She came to feel for John's associates with their perpetual intellectualism, idealism and super-sensitiveness a disgust little less deep than that she had felt for the money chasers at home. Their constant cleverness, constant exhibition of profundity and constant display of lofty virtues made her doubt their sincerity. They were too ponderously serious to be real. She wondered if they did not sometimes lock themselves in their rooms and read popular novels and poems that rhymed. She wondered if they did not slip away to New York and see the "Follies" and the shows at the Winter Garden.

Driven by her love of John and her sense of duty, Mary simulated sympathy with John's friends and joy in their association. It taxed her nerves and her strength. Often after an evening of unusually rare intellectual fare she went to bed in utter collapse.

It was after one such evening that John took her to task for indifference that she had not had the strength wholly to conceal.

"I can't help it," she said wearily. "They tire me to death. I don't like them. I don't think they really amount to much. It's too much work to listen to them. It may be fun for them, but

it's work for me—the hardest work I ever did."

John's face grew dark and hard.

"Very well," he said. "I'm sorry I can't give you the kind of people you like. Of course, my friends aren't worth while. They haven't got their minds set on getting rich, like the dear people back home," he sneered. "I see you like that money-grubbing crowd."

"No, I don't like them, but I don't want them to be able to look down on us because we have nothing. I want to be able to hold my head up. They'll know how we get along. It'll get back to them somehow. I want them to know we're succeeding."

"Yes," he said with bitter contempt, "you want to live here, but according to their ideals. You insist on letting them set our standards for us. They say success is making money—so we've got to make money. Well, you can have your ideas. I won't trouble you any more; neither will my friends. I can go back to my old rooms. I'll send you money enough for your needs, but I'm afraid not enough to let you hold up your head."

So he left her. He was gone a month, a miserable month for him and Mary, a month of bitter self-reproach struggling with stubborn pride.

John despised himself as he had never before in his life despised any one. Yet he strove to convince himself that he was a man abused by Fate or God, a man betrayed and defrauded.

Making the conventional excuses for Mary's retirement, he sought relief in the associations of the friends he had thought worth defending against his wife. The relief was not to be found. The associations, instead of healing his sickness of soul, aggravated it.

He began to admit in his heart that Mary had not been wholly wrong. Some of these men were, after all, rather artificial fellows. They lived comfortably, ate and drank heartily and did not bear any severe hardships for the sake of their principles.

Suspicion presently became conviction that their estheticism and their

altruism were not quite genuine, that their intellectuality would not stand too deep scratching. Still they were far more worth while than average men, too much worth while to throw away. He valued them, valued their good will and admiration and respect. That good will and admiration and respect he was afraid to lose. He would have liked to divorce himself from these men whose associations had failed him in the first real test, but he was afraid—afraid of what they would think and say.

Meantime Mary brooded at home alone. She condemned herself bitterly for her refusal to adapt herself, to sympathize with the one person who had lived and struggled and starved his heart for her, to help him realize his hopes and dreams. For her sake he had suffered himself to be cheated and robbed of years of happiness and for reward she in her selfishness had cheated and robbed him more.

Mary was the one to surrender. She begged him to forgive, begged him to grant "another chance to be the wife I ought to be." And he forgave, confessing his own guilt.

"I don't blame you for feeling as you did," he said. "I can't expect you always to like the people I like: but try to like them as much as you can. I won't ask you to see any more of them than is necessary, but we just can't quit them.

"We can't afford to."

"I know we can't," Mary said wearily, "but if we only could."

"We've got to go ahead and make the best of it," John said. "All life is politics. You've got to make people like you and you've got to be the kind of person they want you to be or they won't like you."

"Yes," Mary said, "we can't just ignore them. We've got to be liked to make even a living. We'll just see as little of them as we can."

They saw as much of them as ever, for as John was afraid to lose all their interest, so he was afraid to lose a part of it.

IV

MARY's mother meantime continued to preach the gospel of money. She had preached it effectively enough through all the years her daughter was at her side and she had no intention of changing her policy now, even though Mary, at John's suggestion, had intimated that the financial homilies were unnecessary and unappreciated. Almost as she had learned her letters Mary had learned that money was the thing of all things most desirable. It was power. It brought all blessings. It was protection against evil. Without it one must always fear calamity. With it nothing could hold terror. Whenever a girl that Mrs. Burgess knew had married she had speculated on the financial status and prospects of the husband. This or that girl "did well." The other could have "done better."

Mary's mother's letters were full of uneasiness for Mary. What would become of her if John should die? What would become of both of them if John's health should fail? If some accident should make him a life-long invalid how could they pay doctor's bills? Of course, they would live some way, she said, but what would people think if Mary's brothers should have to support them?

Mrs. Burgess wondered what would become of herself if she should lose her sons. How could John care for her? What a humiliation it would be for her to ask her friends to "take her in!" She had a thousand fears and all of them she put in Mary's heart.

Those fears Mary could not hide from John. Finally she gave up trying.

"For heaven's sake, my girl," he said, "quit this silly worrying. Look at me."

His voice rose.

"I'm not an invalid—not now, but I will be if you don't stop your worrying, because that makes me worry. I can't have any peace while you're not at peace. Why, why," he cried, "can't we be left alone? Why will your mother insist on filling up your mind with terror—terror—terror all the time! My

God, it's such a simple thing to let other people live in peace, why will nobody do it? Listen. I've got ten thousand dollars and more—already—to say nothing of my life insurance. You're absolutely safe. And even if I died and left you nothing, we have good friends—right here—who would never see you in want. And it's no disgrace here to let your friends share their better fortune with you. That's part of a friend's business. The whole philosophy of life is different here, and if it weren't, can't you see that we're still safe?"

Mary, reassured for the moment, said she saw and really believed she did. She passed the assurance back to her mother.

Mrs. Burgess did not overlook the fact that John had "a lot more than ten thousand dollars already." (Mary had put it in that optimistic way to strengthen the reassurance and to inspire in her mother some respect for John. Being her daughter, she did not quite understand her mother.) It was not long before a request for help from Mary came. Her brothers were doing well, Mrs. Burgess said, but they were hampered by lack of capital. A few thousands, if John and Mary could spare them for a year or two—and surely they could, since John was "doing so well"—would be a wonderful blessing—a Godsend.

John and Mary spared them and a year later "the boys" failed. Mary told John when he came home one night and found her in tears.

"They've nothing now," she sobbed, "and the money we gave them is gone."

John laughed cynically.

"Don't cry," he said uncomfortably. "I'm not surprised. It doesn't matter. I always considered it a gift—a donation. I knew no matter what became of it we'd never see it again. They just worked you—and I let them work you to keep from hurting you."

The words cut into her heart like a hot knife. There was anguish in her voice when she cried out,

"John, you've no right to say that. You know it isn't true. You know my brothers are honest—and my mother.

You know they're just as honest as you are—just as fine—just as good."

He sneered, "Fine and good enough to rob their sister—rob her of money—rob her of life—rob her of happiness. Fine and good enough to keep her working for them—working at what they could hire done for fifteen dollars a week—working when they knew she was miserable and her heart was starving to death!"

Mary rushed at him in a rage of resentment and struck him in the face. He would not touch her, but stood there with his arms at his sides while she struck him again and again. He tried only to reproach her with his eyes; but it was a feeble effort, for already he was beginning to feel himself deserving of the punishment.

"Leave me," she cried at last when her strength was spent. "I never want to see you again. I hate you. Love! What do you know about it—or about justice—or honor—or pity. Money! You pretend to despise it, and still you love it enough to quarrel about it and insult the wife that gave you her very life. Go away. I'll live. I'll work. I can. I've done it before. It'll be easy after what I've gone through these last years. And I'll pay you back every penny."

Her voice seemed to tremble with loathing.

"Oh, I'll pay you back!"

He went out and away from the house with the heart of a man sentenced to death.

V

JOHN MORDANT sent word to the office that his nerves had failed and he must rest. He went back to the old rooms he had had before his marriage and once since. It was the tomb of a living dead man, a dead man living in a hell of which Dante never dreamed.

To Mary he sent letters of self-abasement, letters damning himself, begging forgiveness, craving the privilege of serving her, of being in her presence, even if he might not see her face. There

came no answers. He sent money. His cheques were not presented for payment. He sent men to see if Mary was still in the house. They came back and said she was and that was all.

At last, weak from sleeplessness and fasting, John Mordant went home. He let himself in and searched through the house. He found her sitting by the window in her room. She was looking out into the dusk and did not seem to have heard him.

He spoke her name softly. She did not start nor turn nor answer.

"Mary," he said, "I love you."

She did not move nor answer.

"I may never have loved you before," he said, his body shaking, "but I love you now."

She rose slowly and turned toward him.

He opened his arms and held them out to her and she stumbled into them.

He bent over her and kissed her hair.

"Dearest," he said, "I love only you. There's nothing in the world I love but you. I want only to love you—hold you in my arms—caress you—live with you—live with you—be one with you in body and soul. I'll give the world for

you—friends—ambition—glory. I'll leave them all for you. I want to leave them all. Everything—every soul I know I want to leave—abandon—so I can give all and be all to you."

She whispered, "I love you just that way."

He strained her closer to his heart, crushing her.

"Let's go away," he said, "where I can work with my hands and we can live for ourselves. We can't live here. It's hopeless. We can't go on always compromising, always conceding, always fearing—the both of us—for what people will say or do or think—always doing one thing to please somebody and something else to suit somebody else—never free to live and love each other. Oh, love can't compromise—when it's love. Let's go—now—tonight—to the ends of the earth—Australia—Africa—anywhere—some island thousands of miles away—thousands of miles from this money hell—where not even a ship comes—anywhere, only away—away so far it will be like going out of the world—where no one can ever see or hear of us again."

And she answered with a great sigh, "I'm ready to go."



ASK a woman to choose between going to Mrs. Astor's reception with another woman and going to a dance in a hall over a livery-stable with a man, and—but why waste time?



IT begins with a meeting of lips and eyes. It ends with a meeting of lawyers and detectives.



A MAN is young as long as he is able to make a fool of himself, and not know it.

The Faux Pas

By John C. Cavendish

I

THE first three months of his stay in Washington were now concluded and the position of Señor Ovalles was neither a prosperous one nor a pleasant one. He met Randall, his American friend, at the very moment when his spirits most needed the cheer that Randall was able to give. A new avenue of enterprise was disclosed by the encounter and one, moreover, that held its elements of certain appeal for a gentleman of Señor Ovalles' peculiar temperament.

Coming to the United States, he had hoped for a speedy triumph, although he did not underrate the difficulties of his mission. The new President of his far republic had given him a flattering farewell and one in which the rewards of success were suitably, if obscurely, mentioned. He had come with the full titles and dignities of a Minister Plenipotentiary, although, as he had expected, he was not officially received in this capacity.

The revolution in his country was scarcely concluded, and the new president had barely issued his first official manifestos. The former patriots, now enemies and traitors to the Republic, were by no means all secure in the prisons when Señor Ovalles sailed for the United States.

On his arrival he presented his credentials at the State Department, but no official reception by His Excellency the President was forthcoming. In short, a policy of waiting, that held an element of the deepest suspicion, seemed to have been adopted toward his government, which was not yet recognized.

Ovalles was not surprised. He understood some of the characteristics of the American foreign policy, even if the essential morality that coloured it in those days was not quite comprehensible to his Latin understanding. He recognized, however, that information of a misleading character had doubtless come to the State Department; there were what superficially appeared to be regrettable circumstances connected with the revolution.

For example, the deposed President, with certain members of his family, had been executed without clear reason. In this case Ovalles comprehended that it would be difficult for the American authorities to perceive the peculiar necessity of permanently removing a man who might, at any moment, if alive, disturb the peace and prosperity of his country. The American authorities were, in brief, somewhat ignorant of the policies and necessities of a revolution.

Ovalles' task was, then, to interpret the attitude and probable action of the State Department to his government. After his first fortnight in Washington he began to appreciate the difficulties of his commission.

The ease of his life at home was replaced by a wearisome and even undignified pursuit of a "policy," that, in its elusiveness, suggested a negation of any settled purpose or opinion. They waited, they inquired; they considered; they hemmed and hawed. Ovalles wondered, at times, whether any intelligible real intention lay behind all this evasive mystery.

Once, turning the bend in the street beyond his hotel, and walking up Penn-

sylvania Avenue to keep a brief appointment granted him by the Secretary of State, he paused a moment in front of the White House, glancing across the little street and the space of open ground that separates one wing of the mansion from the side entrance of the State Department. In his puzzled eyes it bore the aspect of a mysterious corridor through which intelligences moved, eluding his grasp, like figures wearing invisible cloaks. He sighed, thought of the ease of his café at home, the relative simplicity of life there, and passing the ballustrade, went down the outer steps to meet the Secretary.

He gained nothing from this interview.

"Frankly, Mr. Minister," the Secretary told him, "we are not yet satisfied as to the stability of the government you represent, nor, if I may use the word, the *right* of that government. In a case like this this our Government is guided by a sense of high responsibility. We cannot recognize the new rulers of any group of people unless we are convinced that they are truly desired by that people and that their intentions are fully in accord with the principles of justice and humanity; in a word, it is our policy to recognize the existence and importance of an international *morality*."

Ovalles, listening, felt that these phrases were capable of an interpretation, a reduction to understandable expressions, but beyond that they eluded him. Their literal utterance, according to his belief, was a cloak for a precision that he sought but could not find. What was desired, what concessions, what interests waited for their opportunity in his country? Alone in his hotel, pacing the room, his tall figure bent a little with perplexity, he objurgated the informity of conceit that had given him faith in his skill as a diplomat.

Then, one afternoon, dining in the hotel, he met his American friend, Randall.

They had seen nothing of each other for ten years, since the time when he had entertained Randall at home when the latter was in South America as an

agent of northern nitrate interests. Ovalles remembered him as an agreeable fellow with more wit than most *Americanos* and more sophistication. Their eyes met across an aisle of tables; the two arose simultaneously.

They clasped hands, asked each other the expected questions, and presently, over fresh cups of black coffee, they were talking together.

"Of course I've read about the changes down there," said Randall. "I rather expected something of the sort, but Itriago—who is he? I don't recall meeting him."

Ovalles told something about the new dictator, extolling his purposes.

"But here in Washington," he confessed, referring to his own rôle, "I'm lost. Presently I'll be recalled and that will be very unfortunate for my plans. It is distressing, Señor, quite distressing."

He extended his slender hands a moment in a gesture of disquiet. But his rather long, pale face maintained the amiable smile that was given incongruity by the weary expression in his black, impenetrable eyes. The American, shorter and more burly of figure, his eyes never losing the suggestion of candour that dwelt in them merely by virtue of their excessive blueness, sat opposite, silent for the instant. These two made a contrast of racial types.

Finally Randall spoke.

"I don't know that I can help you," he said. "I'm unable to guess, any more than yourself, what may be influencing our Government in its course, withholding recognition of Itriago. But—sometimes one can get considerable information out of a woman. . . ."

He paused; Ovalles nodded, agreeing with his final statement as one might to the utterance of a geometrical axiom. He waited for his friend to continue; Randall tapped the cloth with his thick, white fingers, looking down meanwhile with a speculative frown.

"Through the accident of meeting her years ago in England," he said, "I happen to be acquainted with a Mrs. Williston Lloyd, and it might be well

for you to know her. I met her when she was a young girl. She married an American whose home was here in Washington; the fellow died and left her very well off. I know little about social doings here, but I've heard some friendly gossip concerning this lady. They tell me she has acquired very influential friends—a friend, to put it more specifically. There's more than a little mystery about it; you can figure it for what it's worth. At any rate, I'm told *somebody* or other admires her very much."

Ovalles nodded. Randall looked up, meeting his friend's eyes.

"Now," he continued, "I don't know *who* it is, although I've heard more than one name mentioned. The gossip may not be worth anything, but I've had it from several sources, and like as not there's a basis of truth. If the woman has the confidence of anyone of sufficient position, she may know something. An official, in his private moments, desirous of impressing her, would like as not let out something. At any rate, you probably have plenty of time on your hands, and it wouldn't do you any harm to meet her."

Ovalles, perceiving a fresh avenue of investigation with a vista of certain charm, was smiling genially.

"This is excellent, Señor," he murmured. "Of course I'm glad of any opportunity. You will arrange the introduction then? Perhaps a luncheon, if that could be managed?"

Randall nodded.

"It probably could," he said. "You're at the Arlington? I'll do my best and let you know."

II

THE meeting was arranged, and with more favourable conditions than they had anticipated. Mrs. Lloyd expressed her desire to entertain Randall and his friend at her apartment, which was more intimate and better to Ovalles' purpose than making her preliminary acquaintance in a restaurant.

As the day approached, however, his

hopes of obtaining any information from this source became less sanguine. Considering the matter, he came to perceive the comparative importance of his problem as it related to himself and to others. He saw that while the affairs of his country naturally loomed large in his own thoughts, they were not of any great moment to other people.

The ordinary American of those days, he understood, still looked upon the South American republics as territories where rebellions were a part of the day's business, like campaigns to uplift this or that at home. The success or failure of this last one would not particularly interest these people; the woman, Mrs. Lloyd, might even be ignorant of the whole matter.

However, he had gained nothing by waiting in the ante-chambers of officials, and it was emphatically more agreeable to pursue an investigation, even if it promised little, over the dinner table of one whom Randall assured him was a woman not devoid of charm.

But when the day of their engagement arrived Randall was ill, too ill to leave his hotel, and a postponement seemed inevitable. Randall telephoned Mrs. Lloyd, expressing his regrets, but she was good enough to insist that Señor Ovalles come at any rate—and, a little surprised, he set out alone.

Her apartment house was not far from his hotel. It was one of the first of the new order to arise in Washington. Its marble and tiled lobbys, its glaring lights and its clanging elevators contrasted unpleasantly, in his mind, with the graciousness of life in the capital city of his own country, with its low houses spread out genially upon their grounds, red-roofed, quiet, and receptive.

He stepped into the lobby, and after the girl had telephoned his name, went up in the elevator.

Mrs. Lloyd was waiting for him at the door of her apartment, and there they shook hands, looking at each other frankly. Ovalles was glad at the sight of this woman, for he had not been assured that Randall's conception of the

charming would coincide with his own: she was more agreeable than Randall had led him to believe.

They walked together into the apartment and a man-servant took Ovalles' hat, stick and gloves as they passed through the narrow hall. Accustomed now to negro servants in the capital, he was a little surprised to observe that this fellow was a white man.

Mrs. Lloyd led him into a crowded sitting-room that had some of the air of an antique shop; there were too many pictures, too much furniture, too many pieces of vertu. Ovalles guessed that she had filled up her apartment with the furnishings of a larger and more adequate establishment. Here she turned and looked at her visitor.

"Mr. Randall talked a great deal about you, Señor," she said. "He told me of your hospitality to him in the South, and really made me very curious; I couldn't give up the idea of meeting you today, even when I learned that he was unable to come."

"It was good of him to give me such an excellent introduction," Ovalles replied. "I don't know what he said to make you curious, Señora, but I hope I won't disappoint you!"

She smiled.

"Let us sit down and talk," she said. "I always judge by first appearances; instinct and prejudice are so much pleasanter than reason—so I'm already sure I won't be disappointed."

She seated herself in a chair with a high back, in which a face was carved, like a mask of Greek tragedy. The oval top of the back made the frame for her face, as she leaned her head against it, suggesting the curious wooden halos Giotto used to paint—but there was nothing of the Madonna in this face. There was no meekness in her features, but an obvious vitality, focussed now in the upward tilt of her chin and the fully carved lips that smiled easily. She begged Ovalles to sit near her; he took another chair and they began to talk.

"This would be considered unconventional in your country, wouldn't it?" she

asked. "I mean, meeting me in this way: we had no introduction in a formal sense. But in this country you gain certain privileges by being a married woman. Before my husband died my friends used to wonder how I put up with him, he was such a stupid, self-assured man. But I found that the liberties I gained from being married were a compensation—and then, my poor husband was a sort of foil for the pleasant men I was able to meet; knowing him so well made them so much more agreeable!"

She laughed, and Ovalles joined her.

"And the liberties continue, even after his death?"

"Oh, yes," she replied. "That's understood, and it makes me attractive."

*"For always in thy eyes, O Liberty,
Shines the high light whereby the
world is saved . . ."*

She paused, breaking the quotation, and looked at Ovalles with her eyebrows cryptically raised; he felt that she made, in this parody of her freedom, a remote reference to something, to somebody, but he could not follow what he believed to be her touch of irony. He questioned her again.

"So you will never marry a second time?"

"No, never!"

"Not even—to secure a foil?"

"One needn't marry for that," she said.

Before he could puzzle out the meaning of her remark an Oriental gong sounded three notes from another room and the woman arose, smiling.

"Let us go in to luncheon," she said.

"Have you an appetite, Señor? I always have myself, and probably I shall be the victim of it sooner or later by growing enormous and living only in memories."

He followed her as she moved toward the door, that was hung with embroidered portières. She was tall, almost as tall as he, and she seemed to seek the effect of height, for she wore her reddish-brown hair, the colour of walnut stains, with a high knot in back. At

the portières she turned a moment; her eyes were nearly on a level with his own.

"But if it must only be memories sometimes," she said, "I want to store them up now!"

"Even today?" he asked.

She did not reply, but, turning, passed through the curtains, and he followed her into the dining-room.

They were served at table by the man whom Ovalles had originally seen in the hall; in the rôle of butler he was not especially impressive, and Ovalles wondered why Mrs. Lloyd retained him when so many pleasant-mannered negroes were available in the city.

Indeed, when their luncheon was about over, having detected the fellow in an obviously rude stare, he was moved to question his hostess. She admitted her servant's maladroit ways, but explained that "a very good friend" was interested in him and had persuaded her to employ him.

Her explanation recalled Ovalles, for an instant only, to the purpose of his visit. "A very good friend"—that might be the obscure Personage who, in a moment of confidence, could have spoken important international matters into the ear of this woman. He resolved to turn the conversation into channels that might lead to the revelations he desired—and the resolve was forgotten.

His interest in the woman herself was too great for an ulterior motive. Perceiving this, after he had left her apartment, he frankly admitted his failure as a diplomat, but for whatever sting might have accompanied this knowledge there was the compensating assurance of his success as a man.

Their parting moment assuaged his vanity. It has been obvious to him that she found him agreeable, but the ardour of their good-bye had been unexpected, arising swiftly, like a flame that leaps up from smouldering tinder.

After luncheon they had spent another hour in the sitting-room, confess-

ing each other about little things, with here and there a flash of more intimate confidence. He made no effort to mould the conversation; he felt that he would see her again, and many times; there was no cause for haste. At last he arose to go. The man brought him his hat and stick and he stood in the hall with his hostess while they talked of another meeting.

"But don't ask me to say when," she said. "Call me on the telephone when you have the impulse and we'll make a quick engagement."

"Perhaps I might have that impulse too soon?" he suggested.

In the dusk of the hallway her responding smile had its touch of mystery.

"Never deny your impulses!" she exclaimed. "I am very impulsive myself!"

There was a vague challenge in her words, or perhaps an invitation to test her.

"Then you will be able to forgive me!" he said.

He took a step nearer, but she divined his purpose, and as if willed by her in the same instant, its execution was as much the result of her initiative as his own. He held her close in his arms and kissed her, finding in that moment a yielding of his senses to her response that surprised him. They drew back from each other and she laughed like a girl.

"Is this an episode or a beginning?" she murmured.

"That is your decision," he replied.

She frowned, shook her head slowly, as if she denied her freedom to decide, and for the first time since their meeting he discovered in her a lessening of assurance, a subtle falling off in her aplomb, such as might arise in her mind from some secret knowledge that stood betwixt her and the florid ease of her emotions.

In that instant she promised nothing more, and telling her good-bye with a touch of stiffness, he left the apartment to think about her during what remained of the day.

III

His thoughts had at first their tinge of self-reproach. Having pleased her so easily, to question her would have been facile. Say what he would, he had neglected his duty, and that seemed strange, considering the weeks of disappointment and depression that had been the companions of his futile investigations. He had neglected his first chance!

But in the end the pleasant reminiscences of his personal success dominated his musings. After all, the fate of a republic was less important to the moment than her charm reacting to his own.

The novelty of her type engrossed him. The freedom of her position was a piquant fact to a man of his race and customs. He was surprised to realize how indifferent he had become toward his countrywomen. Their florid attractions, long known, had given him the need of this contrast—the sculpturesque woman with her fair skin, brown eyes lightened with cat-like greens, her heroic air that recalled the epic amours from old idolatry.

In the end he found himself careless of his duty and almost forgetful of his purpose. He zested for personal experience, and the zest was in itself an experience; it gave him a touch of youth, it brought back young urges and young illusions.

He made no effort to limit his eagerness, essaying no calculation as to the interval that would be decent before he could see her again. Acting upon his impulse, he called her the next morning.

Over the telephone her voice seemed cold and there was a surprising touch of petulance in it. This unexpected barrier chilled Ovalles, making yesterday's memory more remote, giving it in a moment's time the intangible colour of a dream.

Then, as their conversation progressed, the old note returned.

"Do I sound strange; do I disappoint you?" she asked. "Well, forgive me!

I have more annoyances than you may imagine."

He asked her to lunch with him that day, and after a hesitation that led him to anticipate her acquiescence, she refused.

"Let us meet later in the afternoon," she said. "Have you ever motored outside of Washington? Let us drive out into the country this afternoon; that will make me feel so much more romantic!"

This concluding assertion tempered his disappointment at her refusal to meet him earlier in the day.

"Shall I call at your apartment?" he asked.

"No! Don't do that," she responded. "Let us meet somewhere in the city—four o'clock, will that suit you?"

He agreed through necessity and the place of appointment was fixed. She told him she would come to his hotel.

"Don't bother about a carriage—or an automobile," she said. "I have one of those new electrics and I want to be my own chauffeur, so I'll drive over."

Ovalles spent the morning and the early afternoon in impatient expectation. A quarter of an hour before the time appointed he seated himself in the lobby of his hotel, with the hope that she might come a little earlier than the hour agreed.

He was oblivious to the crowd that passed in and out, save to the point that he examined each new woman's face for an instant, searching for hers. From time to time he examined the dial of his watch.

At half past four she had not arrived.

At five he was paged by a bell-hop, and a messenger handed him a note.

He tore it open. There was neither salutation nor subscription, the handwriting was of course unfamiliar and seemed to have been done in haste, under some stress, but it was obviously from her.

"I find it will not be a beginning, but only an episode after all," she had written. *"It is impossible for me to see you again. Don't think that I have desired*

this. I haven't the chance now to explain."

In his sudden confused anger he almost forgot to tip the messenger, who stood near in stolid expectancy. Placing an unheeded coin in the boy's hand, he strode away, went up in the lift, and hurried to his suite. Here he seized the telephone and called Mrs. Lloyd's number.

A man's voice answered. Ovalles recognized it as belonging to the clumsy servant.

"Mrs. Lloyd is not at home," he said.

"Then when do you expect her?" Ovalles asked.

"I don't know," was the impudent reply.

Before Ovalles could voice another question the receiver was hung up.

His anger now flared definitely. He did not believe the servant; he did not believe the woman. The whole business loomed in his eyes as a nasty piece of evasion, with an attendant mystery that he determined to solve. Hurrying from his room he descended in the elevator again, passed through the lobby, and engaged a taxi outside. He gave the address of her apartment house.

When he arrived he had already begun to have his doubts as to the outcome of his precipitancy. After all, he had only seen her once, and whatever intimacy she had granted then did not assure that her interest had been genuine. Self-doubts assailed him. But these gave a new urge to his determination. He could assuage the smart to his vanity by accusing her.

Her apartment was on the third floor. Ignoring the elevator, he hurried up the marble flight of stairs on the left, and reaching her floor, knocked at the remembered door.

After a moment it was opened; her servant confronted him.

"Tell Mrs. Lloyd that Señor Ovalles is here," he said.

The man showed no intention of drawing back in order to admit the visitor. He stood without motion, one

arm stretched across the door, his hand on the knob.

"She's not at home," he said. "Wasn't I talking to you a few minutes ago?"

There was something definitely offensive in this question, voiced without a suggestion of deference. Ovalles stared at the fellow, who met his eyes unblinkingly. A swift suspicion assailed him: this man was more than a disinterested servant. He was in some way associated with the mystery that now surrounded the woman, but in that moment his function was only half guessed.

Staring a moment longer, Ovalles snapped his fingers under the man's nose.

"You're an impudent *cabron*," he said, "and probably a liar. I'll see to you later on!"

The man nodded cunningly.

"That's all right," he said. "Call me your foreign names, or what you like; I'll have you fixed. I know who you are. But you'd better go, because if you don't I'll telephone downstairs and get you in trouble."

Ovalles turned sharply and strode off into the corridor. He heard the door of the apartment close with a slam, like the sharp report of a small firearm.

IV

THE next morning, arising from an uncomfortable night, he opened the door to admit someone who had been knocking persistently.

It was a messenger who handed him a communication with the familiar seal of the Department of State. After the messenger departed he opened the document and found it to be a summons for his presence that morning at the Department.

This unexpected call relieved his mind of a measure of that extreme irritation and chagrin that had plagued him since the preceding afternoon. He dressed carefully, and deciding to walk, strolled up Pennsylvania Avenue with rather sanguine expectations.

It was obvious, he thought, that the

Government had come to some decision as to his country, and probably a favourable one. With this possibility of official success he forgot his personal disappointment. He could no doubt return home shortly, and there he would be credited with those astute qualities that are invented for the individuals to whom fortune has been kind.

Strolling under the trees of this fair street, he smiled a little sardonically at the day, engaging in his mind a private irony, that, whilst it was self-depreciatory, did not lessen his self-esteem.

It occurred to him that to be successful was merely to be fortunate, and that the honours of success—such honours as he himself might expect—were awarded, not for a reality in superior talents, but again for the result of favourable chance. To understand this, and to estimate himself accordingly, gave him a sense of superiority.

He passed the Treasury and the White House, descended and ascended the two flights of steps leading to the State Department. The Secretary seemed to be waiting for no one else, for a moment later he was ushered into the large reception-room by the ancient negro who served as its guard.

In the center of the room the Secretary sat at his flat-top desk; he arose as Ovalles entered and the customary formal greetings were accomplished. Then he began to speak.

"I must tell you first," he said, "that the Government of the United States has at last decided to recognize the government of President Itriago. . . ."

He paused a moment, and something portentous in his air led Ovalles to withhold the smile that was the immediate impulse of his lips.

"Unhappily, however, the Department finds it necessary to ask President Itriago to appoint a new Minister. I have had your passports prepared, Señor, and you can leave at your convenience. Meanwhile, you can arrange with your legation here to handle the affairs of your government until such time as President Itriago appoints another representative."

Something of Ovalles' profound astonishment was naturally mirrored upon his features. Observing his expression, the Secretary of State leaned back in his chair, folded his hands over his huge abdomen, pulled at his long red moustache, and meeting Ovalles' eyes with an expression whose severity was tinged with a vague irony, spoke again.

"Personally," he said, "I do not feel that it is just that you should go without understanding something of the Department's attitude toward yourself. You may or may not agree with the doctrine I am about to express, but at any rate you will understand it as a fact, and will therefore understand why, in the light of our policy, your presence as Minister is not acceptable to us."

He paused; the touch of irony communicated itself to his words, which, solemnly uttered as they were, conveyed the impression of some underlying drollery.

"So far as the policy of this Government is concerned," he said, "the day and the customs of the old diplomacy are passed. In our eyes a diplomat is no longer an individual who appears in public in a purely official and artificial light and whose private affairs are of no concern. Desiring to abolish the regrettable custom of secrecy that has surrounded diplomatic exchange in the past, it is the intention of this Government to receive only such Plenipotentiaries as are in accord with our advanced ideal.

"It is our conviction that the individual who comes to represent a People, a Nation, must in himself represent that high morality that in these days happily begins to find expression in International Consciousness. In other words, we do not think it is too much to expect and to require that a Plenipotentiary, in his private acts, shall live up to that propriety of conduct which he expresses officially for his nation—that propriety of conduct, in short, which we Americans demand of our own public servants, those who direct our destinies, whether they be high or low. . . ."

Here the Secretary coughed slightly. When his protracted declaration be-

gan Ovalles was still in the grip of his extreme surprise. Presently, however, he began to understand; out of the generalities and vague hints the application of these words to himself became apparent. In Washington he had met only one woman for a moment of intimacy. In some way his brief affair with Mrs. Lloyd had become known! Then it was true!—a really important personage had more than a passing interest in her. And he, the interloper, detected in his initial encounter, had offended and was to be removed!

Perceiving this, the agency of his betrayal was also revealed to him. He recalled the woman's words when he had questioned her concerning her servant. "A very good friend," had supplied the fellow. Ovalles almost started physically as comprehension crowded into his mind. He no longer attended the Secretary's suave oration.

Then the "very good friend" was the *someone*, the unknown admirer, from whose interest in the lady he, Ovalles, had hoped to profit. And this one, whose identity remained cloaked in mystery, was jealous of her, afraid of his own hold upon her, and suspicious of her since, in brief, he employed a spy to watch her and report her activities!

Ovalles, in these clairvoyant seconds, had a swift vision of the maladroitness of the servant carrying the immediate news of his visit to the "good friend"—and undoubtedly, too, the intelligence of that arduous scene of their parting!

The Secretary, with the same air of solemnity that was still mixed with a touch of droll irony, now comprehensible to the deposed diplomat, was expanding upon the new order in diplomacy and the private morality of diplomats.

It was unnecessary to hear more. Ovalles arose, took up the papers that contained his passports.

"I understand, Mr. Secretary," he

murmured. "It will not be necessary for you to elaborate further. And I am surely regretful that I have not measured up to that ideal that is demanded from . . . let us say . . . the *highest* as well as the lowest of your public servants."

He smiled; the Secretary smiled; a moment of mutual understanding seemed to pass between the two men, achieving the unspoken apologies of both. Then Ovalles withdrew.

As he came out into the street again his lips were almost distorted with a smile that expressed the low estimation in which he held, for the moment, his own intelligence. He accused himself of a blindness that was more than idiotic.

What a folly to have entered the lists against *such* a rival! Mrs. Lloyd's "very good friend"—how absurdly inadequate had been his estimate of the station and stature of the man! He recalled Randall's remarks about the "influential personage" who was "secretly attentive." At what low marks had his imagination aimed, seeking to identify the "Personage."

He passed along the State Department ballustrade, but his eyes were fixed upon the White House, which he regarded for the last time. There was a significant understanding in his glance. The walls at which he gazed were almost endowed with an intimacy. Somehow he did not feel entirely like a defeated man. His fortune as a diplomat had been too droll and too unique.

There are, he felt, experiences of life that, revealing the underlying waggery of existence, illuminating the high pretenses of all mankind, are in themselves a compensation for apparent failure.

His eyes left the building that had aroused in him, for that instant, a new sense of fraternity—and he walked back to his hotel swinging his cane with all the aplomb a diplomat should have.



The Fool and the Butterfly

By Lawrence Vail

SHE sat there, across the sward, beneath the stooping, murmurous acacia, Sonia, the never puzzled, ever poised woman creature who baffled him with her dexterous nonchalance. Her fingers busy at a work of threads and colours, now she frowned at Mrs. Ralston, her smooth, abundant mother; now laughed at a simple sally from her cousin, that Jack in tweeds with the vagueness of Western spaces in his eyes.

Conrad marvelled at two things: at his intense, irksome affection for her; at her utter unconcern in the face of his intense, irksome affection.

It was his choice pastime, in these moods, to enumerate her failings.

First, and deepest grievance, she showed no love for him, and it was not his custom to allow his vanity to be slashed more than once by those who lacked the temper to respond to his advances. A number of skirted figures flashed through his mind, all of them of sweeter charm and fairer, many more arrogant and unapproachable—witness Maud, Duchess of Streton Rivers—who had made little show of dallying when he had invited them to be enamoured of him.

It pleased him to review them now, in the hour of his reverse: Philistra, that gorgeous, laughing ballad writer, a man in versatility of genius, a woman in depth of sorrow, fear of solitude, and thirst to give; Minnie Fullard, the little shop girl from Marsh and Snellgrove, Oxford Street, who had made parcel of her timid fears, her household goods, her drowsy past, her wistful future, her small economies, her immense trust, and laid them at his feet; Malona

of the feverish whims and curious indolences; Kushla of the sombre, worried passion; even Chilu Chihi, a Belleville gutter snipe, who had risen to glory on a trapeze at the Folies Bergerettes, and considered her arms proof against any strain, her heart safe against both tender and money bribes.

After their fashion they had loved him, some timidly, regretfully, others with zest and brave abandon. Why did Sonia alone refuse the homage due to his skill and person? If only he could discover a flame of hatred in her, a flare of irritability. All she had to offer was her serene indifference, sometimes a graceful heartiness when a long nap or a new frock had made her glad of heart.

He watched her mingle words with her long cousin, turning on him, Conrad, so careless a profile, on her mother as indifferent a back.

True, if one considered her objectively, with no sentimental prejudice, she had no uncommon claim to loveliness. She moved her limbs in a manner not devoid of pretty rhythm, her skin was fair and clear, but larger women had smaller hands and feet, more daintily gloved and slippered. Her body, beneath her flimsy dress, offered a suggestion of curves too stolid and content: look at the mother and you could foretell the day when time would puff the daughter into a smug balloon of woman.

As in the case of Mrs. Ralston, the years would blow red upon her cheek; a decade would add one, if not two, chins. Her nose, it is true, amused you: it was tiny, boneless, retroussé, as though she must have been curious as a

child and stubbed the end of it against the shop windows of the quarter. Of the rosebud type, termed "cute" and "cunning," were her lips; the gap that formed the mouth seemed to have been cut perpendicularly instead of horizontally, and Conrad had always preferred lips that curved twice before they vanished into cheek. The vague listlessness of summer sky was in her eyes; they held none of the keener rapture of naked heaven seen through rips made by wind in stormy clouds. Her hair—of a pallid yellow without lustre: the longer Conrad gazed upon it, the more wistful did he grow for gayer gold, the gold of corn, of autumn noonday sun, the raw, cheap hue of dandelion.

Having thus summarily disposed of her physique, Conrad turned the batteries of his analysis against her brain, that live, mental stuff of her, quivering behind her white, immobile brow.

He demanded little philosophy in woman, no pedantic, mathematical intellect, but was she not lacking in the minimum requisites of wit, spontaneity and fancy? She was ignorant—surely not a reproach when one considered the ruthless, tedious logic of the blue stockinged, but what made him rejoice with glad antagonism was the nature and expression of her ignorance. Disguised, transformed rather, into prejudice and obstinacy, condemning everything that came not within its narrow radius, this ignorance called itself common sense and thought itself the sum total of intelligence. No gasp of happy wonder shook it, no gust of fear or superstition. She could be annoyed, angry, shocked; she could never be astonished.

The artist in Conrad rebelled at the ill-usage of so much fair material. How alluring it might have been—this ignorance of Sonia, if she had handled it with skill, rather not handled it at all, but allowed it to run its fairy, headlong course, to drift like bubbles in the summer wind. On the other hand, the man in Conrad could not help but rejoice that she had concealed it behind so much neat practicability. It would

have been more arduous, otherwise, to disengage himself from her.

A glad exultation swept through Conrad. He felt strong, free, detached. He took a new joy in the external world. He felt that he could look at Sonia, talk to Sonia, with no personal emotion. A doll she was, prettily pretending to be woman. Thus he should treat her, like a doll; pretend, now and then, to believe in the woman in her. At this instant he would go to her, mingle in the conversation, volley words of trivial purpose, demonstrate that intellect and logic had conquered his whim and instinct.

He saw her, as he crossed the lawn of green towards her, lay the work of threads and needles on her convenient mother's lap. He heard her, with a decisive, abrupt word, interrupt her cousin in the middle of a rambling anecdote. It was as though she had acquired knowledge of Conrad's resolution, as though she felt that damage had been done to her in his mind—damage which must be immediately repaired.

There was the dancing laughter of her teeth, a hint of promise, provocation in her eyes, bidding him cast from him solemn thought, to be simple, to adore her. And Conrad felt his edifice of careful logic departing from him, crumbling, tottering within him. The measure, melody of the part he had been so long rehearsing had fled at one touch of concrete life. He knew that nothing could make him disobey her, that his heavy, reasonable, resolution had no reality, that he was going to be simple, very simple, and adore her.

He heard her ask him in a playful voice pretending to be anxious for what reason he had been sulking.

Sulking! No—he never sulked. He had been thinking—foolish thoughts. Would she walk with him in the forest?

The languor of summer afternoon was in her. She did not want to walk, but she felt that something in him hoped she would refuse, that, to hold him, she must defeat this thing. It would be prudent, at this hour, to make one con-

cession to his humour; later, when she would be sure of him again, she could venture to be coquettish. So, with the divination of the moment, she coaxed a look of vanquished abandon into her eyes, parted her lips as though she were the willing prey of some sweet pain, told him to be patient while she ran upstairs to get her hat.

Conrad watched her disappear into the house. He breathed relief the instant a solid wall cut her moving image from him.

At the same time there rose in him a sullen, impotent rage. What a weak clown he was! At the hour of his strength, when he felt convinced of his power to disentangle himself from her, she had won him back by a woman's ruse, a trick of teeth and eyes and lash.

What was this power which she had—this flimsy, trivial woman creature? What was this magic vapour emanating from her which made him weak and miserable, so often weak and very happy? There was only one way, perhaps, of freeing himself from her. He should take her to some desert place, far from the curious world, and do wild damage to her. There, alone with her, where he would see no other living creature, he might well come to hate her.

He knew, however, that he was too civilized and slack of blood to act in this pirate fashion. He would wait quietly while she prinked and put on her hat. And later, in the forest, he would indulgently term himself a sorry clown, while she simpered casual nothings in his ear.



ONE may kiss a girl once and run no risk. One may kiss her twice and fight one's way out. But after the third kiss it is all over save the shouting.



THE chief effect of love is to drive a man half crazy. The chief effect of marriage is to finish the job.



ALL the things that tempt and ruin men are round—bottles, poker chips, women's waists, dollars.



HAPPINESS consists in feeling superior to your neighbour, and almost equal to your wife.



Chassagne

By Gaston Roupnel

O N causait de la Tour Eiffel. Chassagne écoutait et gardait un silence méprisant. Or, ce n'était pas du tout l'air habituel de Chassagne. Il avait passé sa vie à approuver à n'en plus finir tout ce qu'on lui disait, tout en dodelinant sa grosse tête confiante comme un bon chien. Il avait le port avantageux, le gilet ouvert, l'honnête petite moustache et la culotte à bouffes du vrai compagnon charpentier. Griffotte, vexé, le regarda rageusement sous le nez.

Mais Chassagne avait son idée. Une tour en fer! . . . Ça ne lui disait rien du tout! . . . "Le fer . . . c'est la honte du bâtiment! . . . Le fer est une brute. Il est né sous les coups de marteau, et le forgeron a cogné dessus comme sur un Prussien! . . . Nous, au contraire, les charpentiers, nous sommes avec notre bille de chêne comme avec un compagnon; nous lui passons le rabot comme à un ami; et elle a même plus de cœur que bien des gens. Mais une tour de fer! . . . Ah! là là! . . . J'en ferais bien autant, moi! . . ."

Griffotte ricanait . . . gouaillait . . . Hé oui! Chassagne se faisait fort de construire une tour Eiffel . . . toute en bois, celle-là! . . . "Où ça? Mais ici, à même dans le pays! . . ."

Chassagne expliquait son affaire. Son gros pouce carré s'écrasait sur la table et y faisait de sobres dessins avec de petites rigoles de vin blanc. Griffotte se faisait un horrible bon sang. Mais les deux autres compagnons charpentiers, qui étaient venus avec Griffotte aider Chassagne à boire son vin blanc, étaient prodigieusement intéressés.

— . . . Voyez-vous—expliquait

Chassagne—c'est une simple affaire de savoir joindre les poutrelles de bois! . . . Voyez: avec une mortaise de quart, j'appareille mes deux poutrelles! . . . Je cheville, et voilà trois mètres de charpente dressés. . . . Et je vais comme ça tant que je veux. . . . Avec un nouvel appareillage, nous voici à 4 mètres 80. . . .

Et il continuait . . . montant . . . montant sa tour à 6 . . . à 10 . . . à 20 . . . à 30 mètres. . . . Mais on ne le laissa pas achever. L'enthousiasme compagnonnique gagnait les deux amis Trop-de-Cœur et Simonet. Noir et rouge comme une forge, têtus et rugissant, le petit Trop-de-Cœur criait sa vaillance:

—Chassagne! . . . si t'es un homme . . . si t'es pas un lâche . . . c'est droit demain qu'il faut commencer cette tour! . . . notre tour! . . . Qu'elle ait ses 300 mètres . . . pas moins! . . . Car, avec le tempérament d'audace que je me connais, rien ne me dit que j'en resterai là! . . . Sans la bande de lâches qui me retiendra . . . j'irais au kilomètre! . . .

Mais déjà Simonet sifflotait et se casquettait l'oreille: "Moi! . . . je vas droit tout de suite aller retenir les bois dans les chantiers de montagne . . ."

Chassagne les calma et les retint. Et, sous les ricanements de Griffotte, les trois compagnons jurèrent qu'avant la Saint-Michel . . . elle serait debout! . . . la Tour des Compagnons du Devoir! . . . la tour de 300 mètres! . . . toute en cœur de chêne! . . .

* * *

Dans les semaines qui suivirent, on commença d'élaborer les plans et les devis.

On se réunissait chez Chassagne; on comparait d'abord les années de vin blanc entre elles. Quand on avait bien trinqué, on causait charpente . . . puis anciens charpentiers. Chassagne finissait par prendre en main le crayon plat: "Combien d'étages, disions-nous? . . . Trois, n'est-ce pas? . . . Qu'est-ce que nous mettrons au premier étage? . . . Des rafraîchissements, n'est-ce pas? Et au second étage? . . . Des rafraîchissements, peut-être? . . . Oui! . . . Eh bien! ça va! . . . Nous voici à notre troisième étage, en sommet! . . .

—Minute, petit!—criait Tropic-de-Cœur—arrête ici! . . . Moi, j'ai mon idée! . . . Qu'est-ce que vous diriez là-haut, au sommet, d'une bonne petite auberge avec un type comme moi qui la dirigerait, aidé d'une bonne petite bonne? . . .

. . . Ces copieuses séances et ces grands travaux préparatoires conduisaient nos trois compagnons jusqu'en nuit. Alors Chassagne reconduisait Simonet, qui reconduisait Tropic-de-Cœur, qui reconduisait Chassagne, etc. Ils se reconduisaient ainsi tous trois les uns les autres et ne pouvaient en sortir.

— C'est pas tout ça! . . . fit un jour Tropic-de-Cœur, il nous faut nous en aller retenir nos bois dans les coupes. Il n'y a pas de Bon Dieu s'il ne nous faut pas tout le chêne du pays! . . .

Là-dessus, tous les dimanches, en petite carriole cocasse emplie de victuailles et qui laissait sur les routes l'odeur du rôti, nos trois compagnons s'en allaient, grimpant la montagne. "Hue, Cucotte! . . . disait Chassagne en montrant de la pointe du fouet les grands arbres, les anciens de la forêt, voilà nos amis!" . . . et il leur donnait rendez-vous dans sa tour.

On dînait chez les charbonniers et, ensuite, on jouait aux quilles l'apéritif du soir, afin de donner du cœur aux bûcherons.

Mais un jour Chassagne s'avisa qu'il

fallait faire un banquet. "Avant toutes les entrées, il s'en fait. Voyez les pompiers! . . . Pour un bout de feu qui s'allume tous les trente ans dans le Pays-Bas, ils s'en vont tous les ans faire un banquet dans chaque café de chaque village! . . . Et nous qui allons bâtir la gloire du monde, nous ne ferions pas notre banquet! . . ."

. . . On fit le banquet. Une vingtaine de gros amis y mangèrent la dinde rôtie. Au dessert, on but à Chassagne, qui trinquait avec émotion.

Le banquet se termina tard. Chassagne acheva la nuit, dévotement couché dans le fossé du Creux-au-Loup, où le malin génie de l'ivresse avait conduit ses pas chavirants. On le ramena chez lui en brouette. Il prit là un fort rhume; il rentra les pieds dans de gros sabots à triples chaussons et la tête dans un massif turban de cache-nez. Il prépara ainsi douillettement au coin de son feu les grandes aventures prochaines. Il ne sortit de là que deux mois après.

Les ventes de bois en coupes étaient finies. Les dernières charrettes avaient emmené les derniers chênes. . . . Tropic-de-Cœur était parti vivre chez sa fille à Dijon. . . . Simonet taillait sa vigne. . . . Chassagne connut l'inconstance et la misère des rêves.

On le raillait. Mais sa riposte était facile.

— . . . Tout ce que vous pouvez reprocher à ma tour c'est qu'elle n'a pas été bâtie! . . . Ah! là là! . . . Vous savez assez le dire! . . . Elle n'a pas été bâtie: c'est entendu! . . . Mais de combien peu s'en est-il fallu? . . . Autant dire: c'est comme si elle avait été faite.

. . . Chassagne conserva de tout cela une assez glorieuse idée de lui. Maintenant encore, quand il regarde le ciel, il pense que là-haut. . . là haut, ma foi, après tout . . . dans les nues . . . chez les étoiles . . . c'est un peu chez lui.



They're Off at the Post!

By George Jean Nathan

GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, of the *Saturday Evening Post*, is America's greatest commercial editor. In the entire field of the periodicals there is no editor who can tell so exactly how good a piece of literature it is safe to print without irritating the advertising agent for Stein-Bloch clothes and how bad a piece it is safe to print in order to tickle him. It is this extraordinarily dexterous mid-channel piloting that has made Lorimer's journal what it is, the most successful magazine, financially, in the country. Probably not more than once or twice in the last five years has Lorimer run the risk of printing an incontrovertibly first-rate piece of writing. But, also, probably not more than once or twice in the same period has he run the lesser, but still dangerous, risk of printing a story absolutely and utterly inexcusable. He takes no chances. He obeys the traffic rules as strictly as a baby carriage, and with much the same wistful persuasiveness. Does even one of the favourite houris of his harem do a piece, however good, that might perchance wobble the nervous system of little Miss Vivienne Senfgurken, third daughter to August Senfgurken, Fancy Delicatessen, Main and Poplar Streets, Wentzville, Mo., then does he bid the *enfant gâté* go sell the piece to Munsey. As, for example, in the instance of La Belle Cobb and the tale, "Fish-head."

A two million circulation, like the buzz-saw, is something not to be monkeyed with. To give it a philosophy not concurred in by the Inter-Church Movement and the owner of the Silver Dollar Café alike is to court disaster. A two million circulation must have its

constant assurance that there is a heaven, that thousands of blind, one-legged newsboys have become bank presidents through their sheer indomitable will, that marriage is the beginning of all happiness, and that it is as great an honour to be superintendent of the Excelsior Suspender Co. as to have composed "Tristan and Isolde." Of this technique, Lorimer is a veritable Palladino. And he has gradually gathered around him a corps of cosmic back slappers, joy spreaders and gloom perfumers whose pens obediently jump through and lie down at the crack of his golden whip. Some of these pens are of a very considerable intrinsic merit; some of them may be detected in the act of chuckling between the lines while they pocket the easy money. But others, the majority, are the hack pens of the hack magazines, graduated with the degree of L. s. d. It is upon these latter unimaginative pens that the sagacious Lorimer, realizing the truth of the adage "Set a boob to catch a boob," chiefly depends. George Moore, Anatole France and Joseph Conrad compose a less effective triumvirate for the galvanism of Terre Haute and the Campbell Soup ad, than John Fleming Wilson, H. C. Witwer and Octavus Roy Cohen. And it is upon this class of *Post* writer that our theatrical producers—seeking to profit by taking a second-hand advantage of the Lorimer cunning—rely.

This M. Cohen is a typical case. For many years it was part of my job to read the manuscripts which the gentleman submitted to the chair of this magazine. There was, for a period of four years, scarcely a week that didn't bring in a story from him. And there was,

for a period of four years, not a week that didn't carry the story back to him. For these stories, one and all, were the stereotyped things of the fiction market: the story of Gertie, the pure-hearted chorus girl, who pretends to get vulgarly boiled in order to cure young Quincy Treadwell of his mad infatuation; the story of Old Grouch Collins, the steel magnate, who won't hear of his son's engagement to the poor widow Perkins' daughter Ermine and who is finally won over after Ermine has proved her worth by serving incognito as his private secretary; the *conte* of the burglar who, surprised by the rich and fashionable Mrs. A. Lincoln Rosenblum in her boudoir, poses as the gasman, turns on the gas, temporarily suffocates the *grande dame*, leaves a witty message on the pin cushion and makes his escape with the pearls, the latter turning out in an O. Henry last paragraph to be imitation. . . .

The characters in all these stories were as cut and dried as chipped beef. The attempts at character delineation and characterization rested for the most part in nothing more brilliantly penetrating and pictorial than causing Gertie to chew gum and say "Gee," giving Old Grouch Collins the inevitable perfect and bringing him to mop his brow with his handkerchief every few minutes, and attributing to the burglar a profound admiration for the paintings of Botticelli. But, despite the editorial bigotry that barred these masterpieces, and the many others of a kidney, from the pages of this particular *jardinière* of literature, they did not fail to find their especial market. And it was not long before the estimable M. Cohen's name began to cover the contents pages of all the fifteen and twenty centers. And not much longer before the alert and prescient eye of Lorimer spotted the Boston Garter Galsworthy and gathered him into the fold. And not very much longer before the theatrical luminaries, following the Lorimer lead, began bidding for the dramatic rights of the Cohen yokel diddlers.

Among the foremost bidders for a

stage interest in these art works was Mr. George Broadhurst, whose first production of the season is a dramatization of Cohen's *Post* negro stories under the title of "Come Seven." Cohen's negroes, as those of you who have perused the *Post* pages know, are less the negroes of Joel Chandler Harris than the negroes of Eddie Cantor. They are the coons of the comic strips, with kidney feet, diamonds in their red ties, polysyllabic speech and a gift for indefatigable repartee: in a word, so many Primrose and West end men. That Mr. Broadhurst himself appreciates this is witnessed by his advertisements of the play, in which the minstrel show analogy is made much of. But of accurate observation, of sharp understanding and of telling depiction of the coon as he really is there is no more in the play than there has been in any of the stories that Cohen has written. A young magazine writer, still largely unheard of, has written negro studies beside which Cohen's are so much burnt cork. His name is Ernest Howard Culbertson and one of his plays, "Goat Alley," in particular, is an uncommonly vivid piece of transcription. Cohen does not transcribe the genuine negro, but the stage negro. And the result, in his play as in his stories, is a mere annual show of the Freeport, Long Island, actors' summer colony with all the actors in black face, with the men walking as if their left legs were shorter than their right, and with the women laying aside their corsets. There are a few mildly amusing moments in the play, but they are no more an integral part of the play than Woodrow Wilson's wheeze about making the world safe for the democratic party was an integral part of his war creed. Cohen, in an alien effort to liven up the proceedings, has injected them into his play in much the same spirit that might prompt a producer to inject Miller and Mack's clog dance into "The Count of Luxembourg." Miss Gail Kane is fetching as the pongée heroine, but overdoes somewhat the simpering phase of the character. Earle Foxe plays the mulatto Don Juan as if

the character were a cake-walk. The best performances are those of Miss Lucille La Verne and Charles A. Meyer in subsidiary rôles to which the playwright has contributed little.

II

ANOTHER *Post* story, "The Charm School," by Alice Duer Miller, reaches the boards under the same title. An available and piquing theatrical idea has here been reduced to fluff. The play begins with a statement of that idea—the notion of ridding a girls' school of useless history and arithmetic and substituting therefor a system of coaching in the technique of fascination—and then proceeds promptly to throw the idea overboard and sail ahead with a rubber-stamp stage love affair between the schoolmaster and his ruth chatterton. The dramatization of the Miller story has omitted the theme of the story almost entirely. And what little the dramatization has failed to omit, the stage production of Mr. Robert Milton has pounced upon and quickly got rid of. Thus, to take a single instance, when the curtain hoists on the school we see a group of flappers prettily costumed in the school uniform of lettuce green silk with soft white linen collars. Then, an act later, when the charm doctrine is supposed to have been successfully inculcated, we see the flappers—their attractive uniforms taken from them by the plot and Mr. Milton—stalking the stage in various eye-torturing combinations of pink, yellow and sassafras brown. To all outward evidence, the girls are five times more charming before the plot and Mr. Milton begin operations upon them than after the job has been completed.

This carelessness is observable throughout the play. Miss Miller, on her side, has failed to reveal the slightest trace of an acute eye to her subject—who doesn't know, for example, that the girl in a uniform (a nurse, say) grabs the man twice as quickly as the girl in the dress of commerce?—and Mr. Milton, on his, has failed to cover

up the holes with deft staging. Young F. Scott Fitzgerald, who wrote "This Side of Paradise," was the man to write "The Charm School": he might have made an amusing and searching comedy out of it; he understands the flapper and the young fellows who are in thrall to her. Miss Miller gives no such evidence. She promulgates as her play credo that a girl is charming to men in the degree that she can accurately spell and punctuate a letter, stand up with her shoulders thrown back, learn to keep her financial accounts straight, and obey commands. These, as any man who has ever fallen and then retained enough equilibrium to give his débâcle the eye might assure her, are precisely the degrees in which a girl is not charming to men. A girl is charming to men in the degree not of her exactness but of her lapses from exactness. For one goat who succumbs to a young girl who knows how to spell Popocatepetl there are a dozen whose desks hold silver-framed, pouty, wide-eyed cuties whose "recieves" impress them as adorable. And for one nanny who capitulates to a girl who obediently does everything that he orders her to do, a hundred who gladly gallop to be abused slaves.

Miss Marie Carroll, Miss Minnie Dupree and James Gleason are the best members of the presenting company. Miss Carroll plays two scenes, a preliminary love scene and a scene of passionate confession, with genuine skill. Mr. Gleason is a good comedian in the making. Samuel Hardy, the leading man of the troupe, is chiefly clothes.

III

WHENEVER a new risqué farce is produced we are sure to be entertained with more or less indignant blabber on the difference between the French and American point of view. It is the custom on these occasions to contend that where a certain species of episode may be quite all right for the French, it is not quite all right for the American, since the American does not look on

sex as the Frenchman does. Granting that this is true, which it isn't, what argument could yet be more idiotic? The circumstance that the French as a nation regard sex much more lightly than the Americans as a nation surely could have nothing to do with the American's theatrical taste for sex lightly regarded. As well argue the other way round and say that because the American regards sex much more seriously than the French, the Frenchman could not theatrically abide sex thus presented. The question is wholly removed from the theater. An American audience just as often turns a sex farce like "Fair and Warmer" into a great success as a French audience turns a serious sex play like "Le Voleur." And to imagine that were outright adultery to be incorporated into a sex farce like "Fair and Warmer" the American audience (unlike the French) would have nothing to do with the farce is to ask us to imagine that an audience that crowds an American theater in search of dirt would be insulted and outraged if it got what it went to find. Any adultery farce that was well enough written would succeed in America. Adultery farces fail in France just as often as farces with the adultery expurgated fail in America, and for the same reason. It's a question, in both cases, not of adultery or expurgated adultery, but of the vigour of the farce itself.

The notion, further, that the French regard sex chiefly as a kind of Steeplechase Park is anything but true. A certain class of Parisian regards it thus, just as does a certain class of New Yorker. But the average Frenchman is not much different from the average resident of Oswego, N. Y. There is, accordingly, no contemporary theater that houses so many dramas dealing with sex as a profound business as the French theater. Look over the list of plays presented in the French theaters during the last twelve or fifteen years and consider the enormous number of serious sex dramas produced by de Curel, Hervieu, Donnay, Brieux, Ar-

mory, Lavedan, Bernstein, Bataille, Bisson, de Croisset, Mirbeau, Trarieux, Rochard, de Nion, Porto-Riche, Decourcelle, Delard, the Margueritte brothers, Wolff, Tristan Bernard (in such plays as "Sa Soeur"), Bourget, Aderer, Ephraïm, Picard, and half a hundred others. Try to find an equal number in the theater of any other country! Try, for instance, to find half the number in the American theater that is supposed by the logicians to be especially hospitable to this serious sex point of view.

Times change, and we change with them. A dirty sex farce like "The Girl With the Whooping Cough" packs a Garrick Theater in Philadelphia to the doors, where a clean serious sex drama like "The Shadow" (even with the popular Ethel Barrymore) starves to death in a theater down the street. "Up in Mabel's Room" plays to capacity at the Park Square in Boston after a series of advance newspaper advertisements showing a girl in bed with the caption "Such A Funny Feeling," while a Pinero serious sex drama plays to empty rows in the next block. "Twin Beds," "His Bridal Night" and "The Girl in the Limousine" crowd the Broadway theaters while sex soberly treated by Tolstoi, Hauptmann and others timidly plays up some side-street or alley to a handful of semi-aliens. The American audience, in short, cherishes a dirty farce every bit as much as the French audience—more, I should say. A. H. Woods has made ten times as much money out of loud sex farce as any three Parisian producers combined. And I do not overlook, in the latter category, such uniformly successful Parisian light sex caterers as the younger Guitry.

The latest farcical sex enterprise of this M. Woods is "Ladies' Night," by Avery Hopwood and Charlton Andrews. It is fundamentally as raw as any farce I have seen in Paris, excepting only out-and-out shockers of the stripe of the Cluny's "Cocotte Bleue," the Guignol's "Sacrifice" and Pierre Veber's blushful "Une Riche Affaire." It will therefore doubtless appeal to the Amer-

ican in sufficient numbers to add to the Woods fortune.

In this farce, Hopwood—pursuing his technique of the last three years—has again written a Fourteenth Street burlesque show cast with expensive actors in expensive clothes and minus only the squirt bottle, the Irish and Hebrew comedians, and the demure Salvation Army soubrette who throws off her costume, reveals herself in pink strip tights and goes vociferously into "Jazz A Little Baby." Save for this slight difference (Hopwood has even included a snatch of the ditty just named), the show is of the essential flavour of "The Gay Parisian Débutantes" and "The Girls De Luxe." All the hokum jokes of burlesque are present: the squirting dill-pickle joke, the joke about Brooklyn, the allusion to Hoboken, the wheeze on the Aquarium, and the speculation as to what would happen if the straps of a lady's décolleté broke. The basis of the farce is the old Robert Buchanan "Strange Adventures of Miss Brown" (and revampings on end) formula wherein a man in women's clothes gets into a girls' boarding school: the formula of any number of Al Reeves and Billy Watson second parts. The authors have in this instance merely turned the seminary into a Turkish Bath on ladies' night. There are several good round laughs in the show, but they are achieved by obvious burlesque, rather than suave farce, methods. The wit that Hopwood used to display is nowhere evident. The company includes John Cumberland, Charles Ruggles and a chorus of shapely actresses.

Another, and very dolorous, farce, "The Girl With Carmine Lips," by Wilson Collison, fails to go one-third the distance of the Hopwood-Andrews bumper and will therefore enjoy not one-third the measure of success. It is the usual lingerie fable with no new blush cues and lacks Hopwood's technical skill.

IV

BRIEUX's "The Americans in France" ("Les Américains Chez Nous") is in es-

sence a William Hodge play written by a Frenchman. It is the worst piece of dramatic writing that Brioux has produced. In it there is no trace of the humour of "Les Hanneçons," the imagination of "La Foi," the penetration of "Les Trois Filles, etc.," or even the purely show-shop eloquence of the author's several thesis melodramas. Its contrasts between the Americans and the French are chiefly the contrasts of such exhibits as "Mon Ami Teddy": the rubber stamp credos of the man in the street, the vaudeville stage, and "Je Sais Tout." There isn't a fresh touch in the manuscript from start to finish. It is a play doubtless written in high sincerity and, like so many things conceived in high sincerity, vapourless and flat. Brioux seems to be going more and more to seed with each successive effort.

I did not see the play in its original performance at the Odéon, but I have looked at the French manuscript. The translation by Mr. Leo Ditrichstein loses nothing of the original and provides a fair level of appraisal. The acting is very bad. Miss Blanche Yurka plays the French spinster daughter as if she were a Union Hill stock company leading woman. The actor and actress assigned to the two American rôles comport themselves assiduously in what is known as a "breezy" manner, and the actors and actresses doing the French rôles convey the contrasting composure by dropping their voices and taking fewer steps.

Nor can I detect anything in "Scrambled Wives," by the Mesdames Stanley and Matthews, in "Opportunity," by Owen Davis, or in "Crooked Gamblers," by Samuel Shipman and Percival Wilde. The first is a stale farce, uninspired, witless. The second is a dime-novel of Wall Street and amour. The third is a dime-novel of Wall Street and amour. The staging of the last is very much better than that of the Davis piece and contributes a superficial theatrical value to a composition utterly devoid of any real value.

V

"THE Checkerboard," by Frederic and Fanny Hatton, is their play, "The Great Lover," with a hangover. The patriarchal fable of the love-scarred Don Juan who meets at length with Pure Love in white dimity only to find that it is too late, is here again paraded behind the footlight trough. The present authors have brought nothing new to it, and have injected into it much of their habitual vulgarity. The Don Juan is José Ruben, who, for all his ability in certain departments of acting, is otherwise approximately as romantic as an essay on ectopic gestation.

VI

BURBANK "Divorçons" with "The Comtesse Coquette", delete a great deal of the humour of the first and the wit of the second and the observation and subtlety of both, and you have "Enter Madame," by the Mesdames Conti and Byrne. Even so, there remain two or three amusing scenes which lift the comedy above the usual Broadway thing, though indiscreet casting brings these scenes to battle for their very lives. One can at times almost hear the scenes grumble to be known for their true selves, since the actress assigned to play them is essentially a tragedienne who cat-like sneaks up upon comedy from the rear, pounces upon it, seizes it between her teeth and literally shakes it to death.

The play has perhaps the most elaborately built-up star "entrance" since the memorable one written for himself by the actor, Charles Richman, in his play "The Revellers," unveiled eleven years ago in the Maxine Elliott Theater to raucous chuckles. Historians will recall the great occasion. When the curtain went up on the first act, seven or eight actresses were seated on the stage. No sooner did the curtain get three-quarters of the way up to the flies than they began reading the Richman text wherein the imminent Richman was ecstatically heralded as "a handsome brute," "a superb specimen of pure manhood," "a

man with half a hundred broken hearts in his train," "a Greek god for whom women would sacrifice anything—anything," etc., etc. "Enter Madame" begins with not dissimilar encomiums of its woman star (who is said to be part author of the play). These range all the way from hysterics over her astounding personal beauty to prostration before her shape, wit, animal magnetism, singing voice, male conquests, intellectuality, fascination, irresistible appeal, spiritual fire, gowns, jewels, loveliness and undying youth. Comes then a pause in the dialogue and enters one character after another shouting that the extraordinary creature is about to heaven into view. Comes then a retinue of servants that proceeds excitedly to decorate the chamber with flowers, carefully adjust soft sofa cushions for the reception of the approaching one's aristocratic sit-spot, drape richly hued silks over the chairs that they may properly harmonize with the ravishing one's hair, soften the lights that they may not hurt the bewitching one's velvet eyes, and place priceless vases here and there that the æsthetic sensibilities of the impending perfectio may not be offended. Not having been given a program when I entered the theater, it was perhaps not unnatural that I should anticipate that the very least that would come out after this extravagant overture would be something like Ann Pennington. Imagine the shock, then, when—a hush—a tense pause—a breathless moment, and out came—Miss Gilda Varesi!

If, therefore, I on this occasion err in my appraisal of the Varesi's art, lay it to the after-effects of the bump. The Varesi, as I see her, is a competent, if limited, emotional actress wholly without the comic gift. She plays comedy as if it were written by D'Annunzio. Her humour is passionate, and there can be no more vitiating paradox. She is, even in her placid moments, as intense as a bake-oven. Her repose is a repose that she must act with considerable difficulty; and her subtlety has finger-nails. The dramatic passages she

maneuvers adroitly, but the light passages that comprise the texture of the play she delivers in terms of Dostoevsky, Brünnhilde, and a fire engine. Gavin Muir is a new juvenile with a dry and fetching style; and Madame Michelette Baroni a droll character woman. Norman Trevor, the leading man of the evening, had—previous to the opening of the play—apparently devoted to his tailor, barber and manicurist most of the time that he should have devoted to study of his part. The comedy, in short, is a moderately diverting one very largely miscast. It marks the first production effort of Mr. Brock Pemberton, late of the house of Hopkins.

VII

NINE years ago, in the Odéon in Paris, I happened to see a play about which on a number of occasions I have since written. It was an adaptation by Carlos de Battle and Antonin Lavergne of the Spanish drama, "Maria del Carmen," by the youngster José Codina, called—in the French—"Aux Jardins de Murcie." The work now reaches the local stage with the circus title of "Spanish Love" and under the adapting hands of Hopwood and Mary Roberts Rinehart. Although not a good play, it interests me. It has much of the superficial theatrical vitality of Guiméra's "Maria Rosa" that, while never deceptive, is still momentarily beguiling. Two of its situations—wherein the successful and unsuccessful lovers of the girl confront each other—are sound melodrama. The colour of the original (the French adaptation retained it more happily than the American) is often rich red and yellow. Discursiveness and comedy of the sort injected by ad. lib. comiques into summer garden

productions of "The Chimes of Normandy" contribute tedium to a third of the proceedings, but this tedium is promptly dissipated once drama is again permitted to set in.

The local production follows the scheme devised in Paris by Antoine and elaborated by Gemier, save that the orchestra whose music threads the text is locally stationed back stage instead of in the topmost gallery. The best performance in the present exhibition is that of William H. Powell in the rôle of the weaker suitor. James Rennie, in the opposing rôle, is effective in a loud melodramatic way, but lacks poise in those scenes where poise is most needed. Miss Maria Ascarra is amateurish as the heroine. Other Andalusian characters are played by such authentic Spaniards as Mr. Gus C. Weinburg, Mr. Ben Hendricks, Mr. Paul Huber and Mr. Frank Peters.

VIII

THE Messrs. George Middleton and Guy Bolton are either very bad playwrights or very clever men: which, I don't know. If they write their plays seriously, they are the former. If they write them with their tongues in their cheeks—as mere boob jouncers, they are the latter. Their latest confection is "The Cave Girl," a tenth-rate Nellie McHenry comedy that would appear, at least from its opening night reception, to satisfy the yokelry. Miss Grace Valentine is an attractive figure in the central rôle, and John Cope contrives to be amusing without any amusing lines. The play is a Rialto study of primitive emotions and reactions, laid in very freshly painted Maine woods and with all the characters—the untamed cave girl in particular—dressed in spotless sport clothes of the latest mode.



Gropings in Literary Darkness

By H. L. Mencken

I

VAN WYCK BROOKS' "The Ordeal of Mark Twain" (*Dutton*), now so gingerly discussed in the public prints, is a book that suffers from the defects of its extraordinary merits. What those merits are must be apparent to anyone who puts the volume beside the common run of American criticism. Brooks, at one stroke, cuts himself completely free from all the prevailing blather—the obscene hugging and kissing of fly-blown and idiotic ideas, the dull rumbling of worn-out and meaningless phrases, the childish whooping up of Sunday-school maxims, the whole preposterous tosh of ignorant and unintelligent pedagogues, academic and lay. He approaches his problem alertly, ingeniously, with all the resources of a curious and original mind. He brings to the business a wide sweep of general knowledge, a fine equipment of special knowledge, and a tremendous diligence. By a powerful effort he throws off all the tosh that he was taught at Harvard, all the mouldy *clichés* that orthodox criticism depends on, and all the prejudices of tradition. The net result is something quite unlike anything that any of the elder and more respectable critics of the Republic could have produced, or even imagined. It is a book that is novel, penetrating and full of significance—a book that, at its moments, might almost be described as thrilling. But a book more than once crippled by the very freshness of its attack—a book showing, alas, some of the rough-and-ready clumsiness that is bound to cling to all work in new fields. Brooks labors

far beyond all the customary ocean highways and air lines, far past lights and soundings. Threshing his way through that trackless waste he is often confused, puzzled, lost. He doubles upon his trail. He pitches and heaves. He struggles painfully. He wastes and misapplies effort. Ah, that a pioneer so bedevilled could see his way as clearly as a professor marching serenely from library to campus pump! Ah, that he could give his work both the brilliancy of originality and the slick, persuasive manner of the rubber-stamp!

Specifically, Brooks has made his book too long, and labored many of his points too arduously. His fundamental plan, it seems to me, is sound, but at each stage of its execution he burdens it with details that, by repetition, gradually become irrelevant and irritating. For example, there is Mark's horror at the thought that General Grant's use of English should be questioned. The thing throws a light upon what was at the bottom of Mark's mind; it is apposite and important; it supports the argument very effectively. But after it has been heard of five or six times it begins to take on the character of a tiresome refrain. Worse, the fault is repeated; the same material is used and re-used until it begins to wear threadbare. It is as if the author wrote the book as a series of separate essays, each designed to stand alone, and then glued them ineptly together. A vigorous editing would have improved it vastly; it would have gained a lot by being cut down to half its present length. But when a man comes to the end of so exacting a labor, when he emerges at last from his maze

of notes, he is seldom able to give the completed work the relentless overhauling that it needs. He can't stand outside of it and see it clearly. It appears to him as a sort of wilderness, confusing, dismaying and even repulsive. His one overmastering desire is to have done with it—to shove it to the printer and forget it. I daresay that this madness fell upon Brooks when he came to page 267. He would have made a better book if he had put the manuscript into cold storage for a year or two, and then attacked it with a meat-axe.

But as it stands, allowing everything for its faults, it remains a truly distinguished volume, a piece of criticism that grounds itself upon a hard study of the evidences, and is carried out with good sense, and must needs bring conviction to every open mind. What it pretends to do, in brief, is to examine the whole canon of Mark Twain's work, published and unpublished, in the light of the social influences that played upon him from the beginning to the end of his life, and to show how much those influences crippled and corrupted him as artist. The primary idea, of course, is not new. I have been exposing it in this place for at least ten years past. But Brooks does what all the rest of us were too lazy to do, and perhaps too incompetent to do: he unearths and displays the story in all its details, and fortifies the general theory with such adept documentation that it becomes inassailable. The Mark he reveals so brilliantly was simply a Mark not quite strong enough to prevail against a ferociously hostile environment—a great instinctive artist gradually brought down, by the steady play of conventional forces, to the puerile level of a respectable family man, a popular public character, a silly right-thinker and 100% American. The real Mark, of course, was nothing of the sort. What came out of his native Missouri mud-hole, no doubt by the operation of some chance irregularity in forgotten generations, was a man who reacted to the world in a startling and vigorous way—a man who saw through

the shams of his time and was eager to attack them with all arms—a man as unlike the average American of the mid-century as Shakespeare was unlike the average English barbarian of Elizabeth's age. What finally stood in the Oxford Senate House was the intimate and admirer of Henry H. Rogers, the author of "The Prince and the Pauper," the betrayer of Gorky, the suppressor of "What is Man?" the boon companion of Uncle Joe Cannon, the clown at banquets of the Chamber of Commerce, the poor wreck who smirked at the applause in public and then went into his cell and hid his face for shame. It is impossible to imagine a more ghastly tragedy. And it is hard to think of any more brilliant example of what faces a genuine artist in a degraded and self-complacent *bourgeois* society.

Naturally enough, the chief foes of the true Mark were his women folk. First his mother dragged him down to the level of the Middle Western Methodism of the 50's, and then his wife dragged him down to the even lower level of the Presbyterianism that flourished in the Eastern mill and coal towns after the Civil War. Two admirable women—virtuous, loving, self-sacrificing. Mark loved them and revered them. Their merits hypnotized him. Every time the artist stirred within him, the revolt transformed itself into terms of blasphemy against their goodness. Once in a while the devil prevailed, and he flouted that goodness with such things as "The Mysterious Stranger" and "Huckleberry Finn." But in the main the ladies won. In the main they worked their benign will upon poor Mark. In the end they crammed him with so vast a stock of Freudian suppressions that he became a sort of intellectual invalid, breaking out now and then into berserker rages, like a school-boy writing obscenities upon the Sunday-school wall. It was on such occasions that he singed the delicate withers of Howells. Perhaps Howells ought to be put into skirts and ranked with the two Mesdames Clemens. His influence upon Mark was precisely that

of an elderly schoolmarm. He was, of course, much more intelligent than they were, and he got no personal profit, as they did, out of making Mark fit to join the Rotary Club, the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the Hartford (Conn.) Browning Society. More, he saw clearly the great artist under the motley. But that artist scared him almost as much as the ladies were scared. Himself a graduate of the Boston cold-storage plant, he had a monk's thirst to pull soldiers into the cloister. I have a feeling that, without Howells to keep him in order, Mark would have revolted soon or late against the devastating despotism of his wife, and against all the banal ideas that she stood for. But Howells was always there to pull him up. Tupper stood by to police Rabelais.

I wonder what the effect of Brooks' book would have been had it appeared, say, in 1890. Would it have goaded Mark to rebellion? And, imagining him in rebellion, how far would he have got? The speculation, fortunately, need not detain us. A Brooks was quite unimaginable in 1890. He is just beginning to be imaginable today.

II

"THE Shadow," by Mary White Ovington (*Harcourt*), is a bad novel, but it is interesting as a first attempt by a colored writer to plunge into fiction in the grand manner. Hitherto black America has confined itself chiefly to polemics and lyrical verse, not forgetting, of course, its high achievements in the sister art of music. James W. Johnson's "Biography of an Ex-Colored Man" is not, at bottom, a novel at all, but a sort of mixture of actual biography and fantasy, with overtones of sociology. Mrs. Ovington issues a clearer challenge. Her book shows the familiar structure of the conventional novel—and a good deal of the familiar banality. At the very start she burdens herself with a highly improbable and untypical story. Perhaps she will answer that it once happened in real life. If so, the answer is no answer. I once

knew a German saloon-keeper who drank sixty glasses of beer every day of his life, but a novel celebrating his life and eminent attainments would have been grossly false. The serious novel does not deal with prodigies; it deals with normalities. Who would argue that it is a normal phenomenon for a white girl to grow up unrecognized in a negro family, for her to pass over into her own race at twenty, for her to conceive a loathing for the scoundrelism and stupidity of the whites, and for her to prove it by going back to her black foster-relatives and resolving melodramatically to be "colored" herself thereafter? The thing is so hard to believe, even as a prodigy, that the whole story goes to pieces. Struggling with its colossal difficulties—they would daunt a Conrad or even a Bennett—Mrs. Ovington ends by making all of her characters mere word-machines. They have no more reality than so many clothing-store dummies or moving-picture actors.

Nevertheless, the author shows skill, observation, a civilized point of view. Let her forget her race prejudices and her infantile fables long enough to get a true, an unemotional and a typical picture of her people on paper, and she will not only achieve a respectable work of art, but also serve the cause that seems to have her devotion. As she herself points out, half of the difficulties between race and race are due to sheer ignorance. The black man, I suppose, has a fairly good working understanding of the white man; he has many opportunities to observe and note down, and my experience of him convinces me that he is a shrewd observer—that few white men ever fool him. But the white man, even in the South, knows next to nothing of the inner life of the negro. The more magnificently he generalizes, the more his ignorance is displayed. What the average Southerner believes about the negroes who surround him is chiefly nonsense. His view of them is moral and indignant, or, worse still, sentimental and idiotic. The great movements and aspirations that stir them are quite beyond his comprehen-

sion; in many cases he does not even hear of them. The thing we need is a realistic picture of this inner life of the negro by one who sees the race from within—a self-portrait as vivid and accurate as Dostoyevsky's portrait of the Russian or Thackeray's of the Englishman. The action should be kept within the normal range of negro experience. It should extend over a long enough range of years to show some development in character and circumstance. It should be presented against a background made vivid by innumerable small details. The negro author who makes such a book will dignify American literature and accomplish more for his race than a thousand propagandists and theorists. He will force the understanding that now seems so hopeless. He will blow up nine-tenths of the current poppycock. But let him avoid the snares that fetched Mrs. Ovington. She went to Kathleen Norris and Gertrude Atherton for her model. The place to learn how to write novels is in the harsh but distinguished seminary kept by Prof. Dr. Dreiser.

Another somewhat defective contribution to negro literature, this time by a white author, is "The Negro Faces America," by Herbert J. Seligman (*Harper*.) The author's aim is, first, to rehearse the difficulties confronting the emerging negro of the United States, particularly in the South, and, secondly, to expose the shallowness and inaccuracy of some of the current notions regarding negro capacities and negro character. Most of this balderdash, of course, originates in the South, where gross ignorance of the actual negro of today is combined with a great cocksureness. But *all* of the prevailing generalizations, even in the South, are not dubious, and Mr. Seligmann weakens his case when he hints that they are. For example, there is the generalization that the average negro is unreliable, that he has a rather lame sense of the sacredness of contract, that it is impossible to count upon him doing what he freely promises to do. This unreliability, it seems to me, is respon-

sible for a great deal of the race feeling that smoulders in the South. The white man is forced to deal with negroes daily, and it irritates him constantly to find them so undependable. True enough, it is easy to prove that this failing is not met with in negroes of the upper classes, and it may be even argued plausibly that it is not intrinsically a negro character—that the pure and undebauched African is a model of honor. But the fact remains that the Southern whites have to deal with the actual negroes before them, and not with a theoretical race of African kings. These actual negroes show defects that are very real and very serious. The leaders of the race, engrossed by the almost unbearable injustices that it faces, are apt to forget them. Here is a chance for its white friends to do it a genuine service. What it needs most, of course, is a fair chance in the world, a square deal in its effort to rise, but what it needs after that is honest and relentless criticism. This criticism is absent from Mr. Seligmann's book. The negro he depicts is an innocent who never was on land or sea.

III

Of the novels that I have read of late, the best are "Miss Lulu Bett," by Zona Gale (*Appleton*), and "The Foolish Lovers," by St. John G. Ervine (*Macmillan*). I encountered them after sweating for days through such blowsy bosh as J. D. Beresford's "An Imperfect Mother" (*Macmillan*), "The Pointing Man," by Marjorie Douie (*Dutton*), and "The Ivory Disc," by Percy Brebner (*Duffield*). Both the Ervine book and that of Miss Gale are remarkable for the vividness of their portraits of stupid, unimaginative, groping folk—in the former case, third-rate Irish of the Ulster region, and in the latter case, Americans of a small town in the Middle West. The love scenes between young John MacDermott and Maggie Carmichael, in "The Foolish Lovers," have something of the startling plausibility of the famous love scene in

Swinerton's "Nocturne." The story of Miss Gale—it is very short—is made up of a whole succession of such scenes—the daily gabble of the Deacon family—father, mother, little Monona, daughter Di, the old grandmother, and, beyond all else, Miss Lulu Bett, aunt and drudge. This Miss Gale I have hitherto disesteemed as a manufacturer of glad books for the entertainment of remote Sunday-school teachers and sentimental fat women. But in "Miss Lulu Bett" she shows her teeth. It is a curiously sardonic and amusing tale, done with the highest sort of skill. At one stroke the author lifts herself out of her wallow of tears, and becomes a novelist to be regarded with respect. Let us batter heaven with prayers that she be inspired to try it again.

The remaining novels have failed to lift me, but there is competent work in a good many of them—in fact, competent work grows common in our current fiction. Perhaps you will find something to your taste in "The Wind Between the Worlds," by Alice Brown (*Macmillan*): as for me, I confess to a growing prejudice against all such belated flowers of the New England school. "Growing Up," by Mary Heaton Vorse (*Boni*), is another story worth looking into. Yet others are "The Wings of Desire," by Rita Wellman (*Moffat*); "Married Life," by May Edginton (*Small*); "Wine o' the Winds," by Keene Abbott (*Double-day*); "Mrs. Warren's Daughter," by Sir Harry Johnston (*Macmillan*); "Simonetta," by Edwin Lefèvre (*Doran*); "Pax," by Lorenzo Marroquin (*Brentano*); "The Stranger," by Arthur Bullard (*Macmillan*); "A Maker of Saints," by Hamilton Drummond (*Dutton*); "When Love Flies Out o' the Window," by Leonard Merrick (*Dutton*), the last volume in the collected edition of Merrick; "Mrs. Craddock," by W. Somerset Maugham (*Doran*), and "Open the Door," by Catherine Carswell (*Harcourt*). As I say, none of these novels has bulged my eye, but that may be because I have lost most of my old taste for novels, no

doubt through reading too many of them in the years gone by. If you still like to tackle them on rainy Sundays, I give you the above as specimens that will probably entertain you.

A fashion for short-story anthologies seems to have set in, perhaps on the heels of Dr. O'Brien's success with his annual volumes of magazine trade-goods. Here, for example, are "The Best Ghost Stories," edited by Arthur B. Reeve (*Boni*); "The Best Psychic Stories," edited by Joseph Lewis French (*Boni*), and "The Great Modern American Stories," edited by the late William Dean Howells (*Boni*). The French volume includes stories by Jack London, Ambrose Bierce, Lafcadio Hearn and Algernon Blackwood, the Reeve volume draws upon Kipling, Bulwer-Lytton, E. F. Benson, Vincent O'Sullivan, Bierce and Daniel De Foe, and that of Howells presents an even more imposing array of names, including those of Mark Twain, Henry James, Bret Harte, Edith Wharton, Dreiser, George Ade, Henry B. Fuller and Edward Everett Hale. Howells' selections, in the main, are extremely conventional; the stories he chooses and praises are precisely the stories that a Harvard instructor in English would have chosen thirty years ago. But he leavens the dose with Ade and Dreiser—a last gesture of revolt, somehow a bit pathetic. His preface is extremely interesting. Reeve's is puerile. French's is quite as bad, and the reinforcing introduction that he appends, by Dorothy Scarborough, Ph.D., a lady professor in Columbia, is worse.

IV

MME. MAGDELEINE MARX'S "Woman" (*Selizer*) comes in with blurbs plastered all over it. Romain Rolland calls it "the work of a great talent, a vigorous work." George Brandes calls it "an admirable book, original, profound, daring." Henri Barbusse says, "I have no hesitation in applying to it the words 'genius' and 'masterpiece.'" Bertrand Russell allows that it is "magnificent." Israel Zangwill compliments

the author on her "wonderful gifts as a novelist." Théophile Steinlen swears that "it is life, it is beautiful." . . . Set afire by these astounding encomiums, I abandoned all other concerns, and retired to my cabinet to debauch myself with an intellectual feast. What I found was 228 pages of sentimental mush—a compendium of reflections that would scarcely do credit to a bright telephone operator. Put beside the similar tome of Marie Bashkirtseff or the still better one of Mary McLane, it instantly shrinks to obviousness and silliness. I estimate it, of course, by a translation, and maybe the translation is bad—maybe there has been some rough, cruel bowdlerizing, as in the case of Barbusse's "L'Enfer." But I doubt that even a translator could completely conceal all the extraordinary merits mentioned in the blurbs of MM. Rolland, Brandes, Barbusse, Zweig, Steinlen and Zangwill. How, then, account for their enthusiasm? Why do they protest so much? The answer, I suspect, is to be found in a circular issued by the American publisher. I quote: "Madame Marx is a woman of unusual beauty, young, accomplished, and socially charming." I quote again: "A lovely pale face set with two great black flames, glowing and mystic beneath pencilled arched brows." I quote a third time: "A calm beauty somewhat statuesque, as though chiseled by Phidias, a transparent milky purity, a goddess face but a human soul." Rolland is 54 years old; Steinlen is 61; Brandes is 78; the rest are all far beyond the age of discretion. Trust the old rats to fall for a cutie!

V

Books that have bored me horribly: "A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis," by Prof. Dr. Sigmund Freud (*Boni*); "Our Economic and Other Problems," by Otto H. Kahn (*Doran*); "Buffalo Bill's Life Story" (*Cosmopolitan*); "The Advancing Hour," by Norman Hapgood (*Boni*); "Psychical Miscellanea," by J. Arthur Hill (*Harcourt*).

All of them, it goes without saying, have been getting good notices in the newspapers. Freud's book is an astoundingly turgid and tedious exposition of his ideas; if you want to know what he is driving at you had better go to the books of his disciples, notably Brill. In the present case do not fall into the error of blaming the anonymous translator. I have tackled Freud in the original Viennese Hochdeutsch, and came from the encounter with my head swimming. He is one of the worst writers now living in the world. Another bombastic fellow is Kahn. Having taken to the stump during the late war as a patriot, and having tasted the sweet applause of Chambers of Commerce, Booster Clubs, Hog Island Home Guards and other such sodalities of *intelligentsia*, he now throws himself into the great task of teaching Americans how to suck eggs. His book is fat, stupid and bumptious. Even when his arguments are sound and obvious, which is not infrequently, he somehow manages to make them appear obnoxious. Nevertheless, I believe that even Kahn could write an amusing and instructive book if he would. Let him abandon economics and politics, and concentrate his talents upon a handbook of social pushing. The Hapgood tome offers a belated dose of Wilsonian idealism. God help us all! The Hill book is full of spiritualistic poppycock.

"If You Don't Write Fiction—," by Charles Phelps Cushing (*McBride*), is a sort of text-book for country school-teachers, A-to-D book-keepers and subway ticket-choppers who aspire to become literary hacks. The number of such aspirants in the United States is truly amazing. They support three or four magazines devoted to literary trade-news, and are enormous consumers of works explaining the whole art of short-story writing in ten lessons—chiefly by professors in obscure schools of journalism. Prof. Cushing aims his tuition at those who are too stupid to attempt fiction. Even for these, it appears, there is yet hope. With the aid of a camera they may build up a

steady and profitable business in "serious" articles. The choice of subject is left to chance. The accomplished literatus of the half-world is able to tackle anything. . . . A depressing book.

VI

ENORMOUSLY better stuff is in "The Life of Francis Place," by Graham Wallas (*Knopf*); "Rambling Recollections," by A. D. Rockwell (*Hoebner*); "The Great Steel Strike," by William Z. Foster (*Huebsch*), and "The Land of the Blessed Virgin," by W. Somerset Maugham (*Knopf*). The life of Place is dully written and it deals with one of the dullest of men, but nevertheless it is full of interest as a full-length study of a primeval right-thinker. Place, a rich tailor, was one of the first Englishmen to get himself drunk upon what is now called Service. For fifty years he raged and roared in London, struggling to uplift those that were weary and heavy laden. Superficially, he appeared to succeed; nearly all of the multitudinous reforms that he advocated were finally adopted. But when the smoke cleared away it became apparent that the lower classes were relatively almost as badly off as they had been at the start—that their superiors were still hornswoggling them, living upon them, and grinding them down. Everything that is thoroughly American is simply an imitation of something that the English have got over. So with this Service. Place not only went through, a hundred years ago, all of the hopes and struggles of the American Liberals, parlor Socialists, uplifters and forward-lookers of today; he also faced the same opposition and employed the same devices, many of them more than a little shady. His scheme for blackjacking the House of Commons of his time was almost precisely the scheme now employed by the Anti-Saloon League to blackjack the poltroons and scoundrels at Washington. An instructive book—cruelly hard to read, but still full of information.

Maugham's volume is lyrical and even

impassioned—a gaudy prose ode to the beauty and romance of Andalusia. I recommend it to all who would escape for an hour or two from the Methodist paradise. Dr. Rockwell's autobiography is almost as charming—a colorful and often lively and amusing record of a long, active and very useful life. The Foster pamphlet, I suppose, will be furiously hammered in the newspapers before these few lines get into print. The author is the same Foster who was exhibited before the public, a year or so ago, as the anti-Christ of the steel strike, and later investigated at great length by a committee of numskull United States Senators. His own account of the strike, simple, modest and carefully documented, proves what I suspected at the time, to wit, that the current newspaper accounts of both the strike and the man were absolutely dishonest. As between Foster and the newspapers, I believe Foster. He disposes of most of the charges made against him—that the strike was inspired by the Bolsheviki, that it was undertaken against the opposition of Gompers, that it was carried on by violence, that it was planned as a revolution rather than as a strike. His evidence on all these points seems to me to be conclusive. And he is equally convincing when he says that the strikers were denied their common right to free assemblage and free speech, that they were attacked and often murdered by thugs employed by the steel companies, and that the police and soldiers aided and abetted these thugs. I am against strikers, and am glad that these of the steel mills were defeated. My sympathies are wholly on the side of capitalism. But if capitalism keeps on seeking to secure itself by trampling on the plain rights of its opponents, and by debauching the already corrupt and stinking press, and by turning the law into its slave and the government into its pimp, then it will keep on raising up such able and relentless enemies as Foster, and soon or late they will give it such a clout across the occiput that its so-called brains will be spattered all over the universe.



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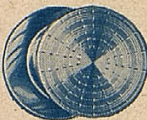
10K. Solid Gold
Mother of Pearl
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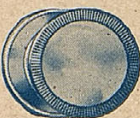
14K. Gold Top



10K. Gold Top



Gold Filled



Sterling Silver
Mother of Pearl
Center

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Good-bye old style link
and stiff-post buttons-
Today Kum-a-parts button
the nations cuffs - - -



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permitting the easy rolling up of sleeves,
avoiding the forcing of hands thru but-
toned cuffs when dressing - - -

Snap-and it's closed

holding the soft cuff snugly in graceful
lines about the wrist; adding the final touch
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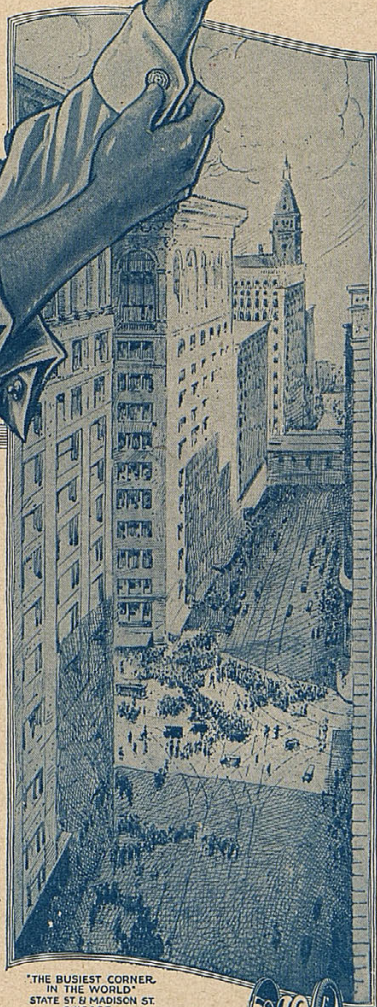
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CLOSED

INSIST ON SEEING THE NAME KUM-A-PART ON THE BACK OF THE BUTTONS YOU BUY. IT'S YOUR PROTECTION AGAINST IMITATIONS.

CHARLES FRANCIS PRESS, NEW YORK

"Ouija! What's the good word?"



MY YOUNG sister.
* * *
HAS A Ouija board.
* * *
AND SHE believes it.
* * *
AND TALKS to Noah.
* * *
AND I think she talks.
* * *
TO HER best fellow.
* * *
WHO'S DEAD but doesn't know it.
* * *
AND I used to give her.
* * *
THE LOUD, rude laugh.
* * *
BUT I'M sorry now.
* * *
BECAUSE LAST night.
* * *
I WAS home alone.
* * *
SO I got the board.
* * *
AND PUT in a call.
* * *
FOR JOHN Barleycorn.
* * *
AND OTHER departed spirits.
* * *
BUT THE line was busy.
* * *
FOR NOTHING happened.
* * *
THEN I cheated a little.
* * *
AND IT spelled this.
* * *
"GRAMMASHOTTA SEVEN."
* * *
SO I shut off quick.
* * *

TO HEAD off any.
* * *
FURTHER FAMILY scandal.
* * *
THEN I stopped to smoke.
* * *
A CIGARETTE.
* * *
AND AFTER a while.
* * *
I CRANKED up weejee.
* * *
AND ALL of a sudden.
* * *
IT STARTED off.
* * *
AND QUICK as a flash.
* * *
IT SAID something.
* * *
"THEY SATISFY."
* * *



"SATISFY!"—that's the good
S word. Just light up a Ches-
terfield and see what experts
can do with fine Turkish and
Domestic tobaccos when they
blend them in that can't-be-
copied Chesterfield way. You'll
say "they satisfy."

They Satisfy **Chesterfield**
CIGARETTES

Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.